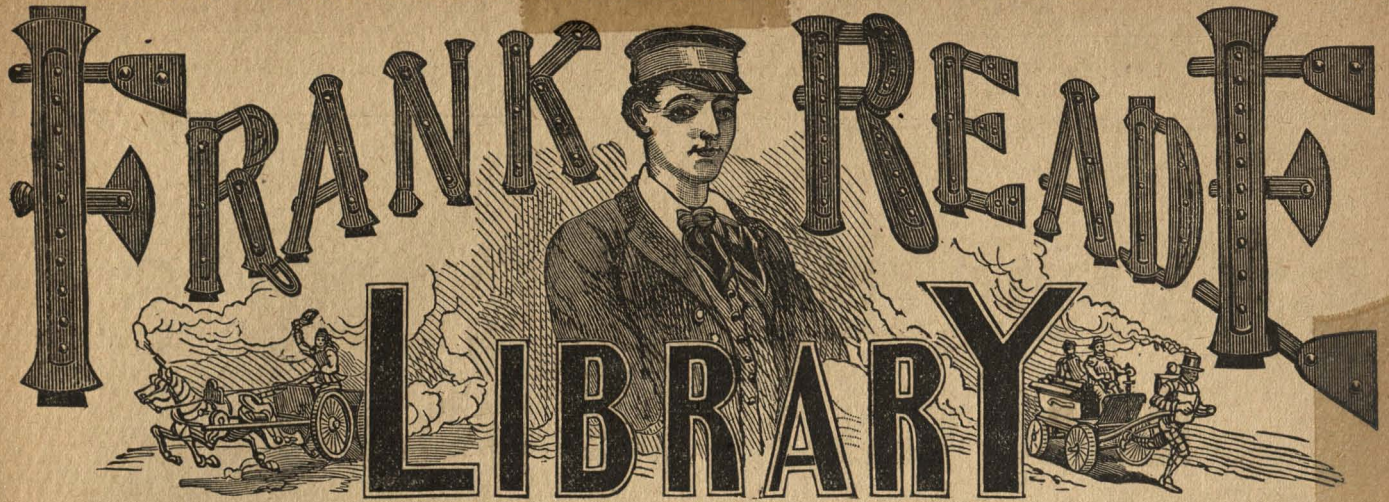


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FRANK READE JR.'S Electric Ice Boat; OR, LOST IN THE LAND OF CRIMSON SNOW. PART II. By "NONAME."



The enormous creature, goaded to fury by the wound of the harpoon, had a portion of its body upon the man, holding him down, and its gaping mouth was raised over the poor fellow's head. "Fire, Barney, it is going to kill him!" cried Frank.

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FRANK READE JR.'S ELECTRIC ICE BOAT:

OR,

Lost in the Land of Crimson Snow.

By "NONAME,"

Author of "Frank Reade, Jr., in the Sea of Sand, and His Discovery of a Lost People," etc., etc., etc.

PART II.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE BREAKING ICE.

FRANK and the professor remained at the bottom of the fall that poured down from the aperture that led from the main ice-cavern, and kept calling for help, until the intruding waters drove them back.

Forced by the rapidly increasing strength of the tide to retreat in their kyacks, they were whirled further into the cavern, and found the place momentarily getting darker, until it was difficult to see ahead.

"Doctor," exclaimed Frank, presently, "the cavern is filling with water."

"Have we been lured into a trap by any treachery?" queried Vaneyke.

"Remember, we came through the aperture of our own accord."

"But why didn't the Esquimaux answer our shouts for help?"

"They went back to the entrance of the cave to help the females in the oomiaks carrying Barney and Pomp, that were stoven by their collision."

"So they could not have heard us, you imagine?"

"Loud as the noise of inpouring water was, it must have smothered our voices, and thus prevented them learning what peril we are in."

"Paddle close to me, Frank, so I won't lose you in this gloom."

"Wait, doctor, and I'll give you a good light. I've got a powerful little electric lantern in my pocket, and have only got to turn a thumb-screw to ignite it. Hold up your kyack a moment."

Resting on his paddles, Frank withdrew a flat bull's-eye lantern from his pocket, and started the incandescent stream of light.

It streaked out of the lens far ahead, cutting through the gloom like a knife, and Frank flashed its powerful rays all around.

They saw that they were in a tremendous cavern.

But the fast flowing waters were filling the place, and rapidly lifting the two kyacks up nearer to the ceiling.

"With a rise of fifty feet, as the Esquimaux chief said the waters of the lake had," said Frank, gloomily, "this cave will become filled and drown us unless we discover a means to get out of it soon."

"There are a number of crevices in the walls; let us venture in one," suggested Vaneyke. "It may lead to an avenue of escape."

With a sweep of their paddles they drove the light boats into an aperture, and found that it gradually widened as they proceeded, until it became another lake.

Down through the roof there opened several shafts that let in air and daylight, but the surrounding walls were smooth and unbroken by the slightest crack.

"There is no way to pass out of here," said the doctor, as Frank flashed the light of his lantern around at the walls.

"Nor can we retreat now, for the passage we came through is submerged by the inflowing water," said Frank.

"Do you observe that we are ascending on the rising water toward the roof of this cavern?" queried the alarmed professor.

"Certainly, Vaneyke, and it's lucky for us that we are."

"I fail to see where the good fortune comes in, Frank."

"When the cavern gets so full of water that there will be no room for us between the surface and the ceiling, instead of us drowning like rats in a trap, we can climb up the shafts and thus get out of here. That's plain enough, ain't it?"

"It's a chance, that's all, for the distance from the ceiling to the outer air looks to be nearly fifty feet, and that's a pretty long climb up the steep and slippery sides of those shafts."

"The climb up to heaven is still higher, if we don't try it," said Frank, dryly.

Rapidly the water kept filling up the cavern, until at last the kyacks were elevated to the roof, and in order to maintain an upright position, Frank and the doctor had to get the boats under the shafts.

Then they unlaced the skin boat covers from around their waists and began to climb up the shafts by pressing their hands and feet against the sides.

Very few niches, protuberances and clefts were met with to aid their ascent, and they slipped back occasionally twice as far as they advanced, but they had to keep on, for the rising waters beneath were now lapping up into the shafts.

Panting and half exhausted, they both finally reached the top, and got out of the holes on the summit of the icy hill from which Barney fell.

Appearing like two jacks-in-a-box, almost simultaneously, they glanced at each other, separated a few feet apart as they were, and then burst into a hearty fit of laughter, they both looked so comical.

"We are safely out of the cave now," said Frank, securing a firm seat, "but how under the sun are we to get down from here?"

"Slide," sententiously replied the doctor with a grin.

"We can each secure a good-sized cake of ice, hang on to it, and if we toboggan down this smooth place we'll land in that snow bank if we don't tumble off before we get to the bottom."

"There are lots of pieces plenty big enough for our purpose lying about up here that we can easily detach," said Vaneyke.

"Help yourself then, for I am going to attempt it now."

"All right, go ahead; there's no help for it."

They each secured a good-sized cake of the ice holding it with difficulty after they were once detached, and sitting down upon them, away they went like two meteors.

With a rush, a scrape and a rattle the ice cakes shot down the steep side of the hill, particles flying off in all directions.

"Oh!" gasped Frank, as his struck a slight elevation.

It split in two, gave a sudden lurch, flung him up in the air and he spun around and around before he landed down in the snow drift all in a heap, and sent a shower of the crimson flakes splashing up in the air around about the spot where he struck.

The doctor was coming sliding down behind him, and was less fortunate, for his ice block struck the remains of Frank's and sent him rolling off upon the slide.

He rolled the rest of the way down, and brought a cloud of snow with him in which he became so enveloped that he was utterly invisible when he landed on top of Frank in the drift.

For a moment they both floundered around in the snow, flinging it up in clouds, and finally emerged covered with it from head to foot.

"Hurt?" asked Frank, gouging it out of his eyes.

"No. You?" returned the scientist, clapping it off his clothes.

"Not even scratched," said Frank, briskly shaking himself.

"Quite a skate," remarked Vaneyke, glancing up at the hill top.

"Too much. But I wonder where we are?"

"Must be in back of where we entered the cavern."

"Look here, doctor! By jingo, here are blood stains and foot prints."

"Somebody must have been here and got hurt, Frank."

"Recently too. There are two trails, one coming, and the other going."

"How many people?"

"Three men came and two walked back."

"Strange! Where did the other go?"

"No single trail shows that he departed, but these blood stains are evidence enough that one of them hurt himself and that the two others carried him away in the direction they came from."

"Let us follow their trail."

"Decidedly, for they may have been our friends, and if they were the tracks will lead us back to the Esquimaux village."

With this determination they set out on the trail, little knowing that it was made by Barney, Pomp and the Esquimaux chief.

After a long walk, they found themselves down upon the ice of the lake again, and in the distance descried the village.

Further off they beheld the ice-boat under sail, bearing away to the eastward, in pursuit of a female polar bear with two cubs, and at once imagined that Barney and the negro were on board managing the electric craft.

"I wonder why they did not try to find out what became of us?" said Frank, feeling slightly offended.

"Surely they can't be indifferent to our fate," observed the doctor, a little bit nettled. "It don't seem like them to be so."

Just then the bear and its cubs came running toward them, the ice boat in pursuit, St. Malo steering it, and Pomp out on the forward deck with a rifle in his hand, with which he was firing.

The two adventurers paused.

"What vitality that creature has got," observed Frank, keenly watching the chase. "The darky had fired half a dozen shots at it thus far, but it does not seem to be so much as wounded!"

"He isn't firing to kill—he is chasing it back to camp," answered the doctor. "Don't you see how they are heading it off?"

"True; and there are all the Esquimaux, armed to the teeth, and running toward it. Evidently Pomp is trying to corral the brutes to make sport for the natives."

The bear and its young ones ran right in the midst of the band of Esquimaux, who, surrounding it upon all sides, attacked it with a coolness of courage and a ferocity of temper that showed more than a mere love for the exciting sport.

The fact was that the beast had made a raid on the village, and having killed a child, it aroused the animosity of the whole tribe, who, calling upon Pomp to aid them to kill it, aroused the darky from his fit of grief over the supposed death of Barney, and enlisted his services.

Frank and the doctor made a rush for the scene of the conflict which the boat had reached ahead of them, and a yell pealed from the darky's lips when he saw them—a cry of delight that was taken up by all the tribe, who felt sure they had perished.

Mounting to the deck of the ice boat, our friends warmly shook hands with their colored companion, glanced around, and nodding to the two Frenchmen inside, they asked:

"Where is Barney?"

"Dead," said Pomp, tears starting to his eyes.

"Dead?" echoed both Frank and the doctor in startled tones.

"Dead an' buried!" sobbed Pomp, brokenly. "I done seed it done!"

"In Heaven's name what killed him?" gasped Frank, tremulously.

"We went ober ter de ice hill fo' ter fish yo' outer de cave, an' he fall down heah from de top, an' done kill hisself. Oh, Lor! Oh, Lor!"

"Ah! The tracks—the bloodstains we saw," exclaimed Frank.

"I thought it queer that they'd leave us to our fate without making some effort to find out what became of us," said the doctor.

They were both fairly stunned with grief over the news.

"Whereabouts have you buried him?" asked Frank, presently, for he was so choked with emotion that he could scarcely speak.

"Ober dar in dat igloo wif de American flag on top wot I put dar."

"Poor Barney! Poor Barney! Are you sure he is dead, Pomp?"

"Kin swar to it, sah," sobbed the grief-stricken darky.

"I must see him once more before I part with him forever."

"Oh, Massa Frank, yo' kain't, nohow. De hut am sealed up."

"I wouldn't care if it was guarded by cast iron walls I'd get in!"

The Esquimaux fighting the bear and its cubs were in his way just then, but he drove the boat over near the hut.

Glancing down at the snarling and growling beast, he saw it knock one of the men over and prepare to tear him to pieces.

The spectators were horror-stricken for an instant, but the fallen man's wife dashed up to it with the courage of desperation, a long knife clutched in her hand, and plunged it into the monster, diverting its attention from its intended victim.

It turned on her, and she fastened a blazing glance upon it, and recoiled step by step, brandishing the knife in its face.

The cubs darted at the brave woman, who was trying to lure the monster away from her husband with her own body in order to save his life, and the great beast arose upon its haunches.

"Once its paws strike her she will perish!" said Frank, as he clutched a rifle, "but by heavens it won't have the chance!"

And up to his shoulder went the rifle in a twinkling.

A concerted yell pealed from the Esquimaux when they saw the bear's action, and they let drive a volley of arrows and harpoons at it that stuck all over its already wounded body.

Utterly ignoring its wounds, save to utter a frightful roar of agony, the beast was just upon the point of striking the woman a blow when Frank pulled the trigger.

A sharp report pealed out.

The bullet crashed into the bear's brain.

It fell to the ice and rolled over dead.

Glad was the cry of victory and satisfaction that arose from the natives.

They started on a run for the cubs, and savagely attacked the vicious little beasts, killing them with a hundred weapons.

But the ice began to break beneath their feet with intonations of thunder and swayed with the fearful motion of an earthquake, causing a terrible tremor of fear to assail everybody.

Then they began to shriek out in affright and huddled together in a frightened mass, too terrified to run for the main to save themselves before it would finally cave in.

The tide was only half in.

Fully twenty-five feet of open space intervened between the bottom of the ice that covered the lake and the surface of the rising water below, and when the cave-in of the breaking ice came it would doubtless be terrible.

"The ice is breaking! The ice is breaking!" they hoarsely wailed.

"They can't reach shore before it goes down!" groaned Vaneyke.

"Not one shall perish! Get them on the boat!" shouted Frank.

He grasped an ax and sprang from the boat and drove the terrified natives upon the deck with a few sharp words.

Then heedless of the thunderous reports and the swaying and shaking of the ice he attacked the hut Barney was imprisoned in with the ax.

"I'll have the body of my old friend," he muttered, grimly, "if I have to perish while I'm dragging him out of this ice hut!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CIVILIZED WHITE CANNIBALS.

SHOWER after shower of strong, sturdy blows rained from Frank's ax upon the side of the hut in which Barney was imprisoned, and the ice flew in all directions, until a hole was cut through.

"Help!" groaned a faint voice inside, in gasping accents.

"Barney!" shouted Frank with a sudden, overwhelming thrill of delight as he recognized the tones of his old friend's voice. "By heaven he is alive."

"Oh, Master Frank! Save me fer ther love av heaven! I'm buried alive."

"Mercy! This is terrible! Wait, Barney, I'll have you out in a moment, old fellow! Look out of the way of the flying ice!"

Bang, bang, bang! rattled the quick blows, and the opening became bigger each moment, the influx of fresh air just coming in time to save the life of the half smothered Irishman.

Thundering and crashing with the noise of a thousand batteries of artillery, the icy surface of the lake began to cave in all around.

Vast cracks split and radiated in all direction, the splashing of water resounded as the

the ice blocks fell down into the lake beneath and the terrified natives on the ice boat began to yell for help.

"Hurry up, Frank!" shouted the doctor excitedly. "The ice is fast going to pieces, and in a few moments we won't get away at all."

"Barney is entombed alive! Wait till I save him."

"Alive! Good Lord!"

Pomp gave a yell of supreme delight and sprang from the boat.

By that time the aperture in the hut was large enough for the hapless Irishman to crawl through and he appeared.

A cry of pity escaped Frank when he saw Barney's white face all cut and scratched, and the other evidences of his fall.

Catching hold of him by the arms, above his elbows, Frank pulled him out of the opening, and Pomp grabbed him up.

"Oh, bress de lamb, he am alive!" yelled the delighted coon.

Then he made a run for the boat, for the ice was groaning, splitting and grinding all around at a terrific rate. Frank ran after him.

They barely had time to get on board, when the entire middle of the lake sagged down, and kept sinking lower and lower until at last with an awful noise it fell down.

Fortunately the boat was speeding away ere the final crash came, impelled by sails and wheels, and had arrived close to the main when the ice went through.

A fearful noise followed.

A tremendous upheaval of ice and water arose.

Fragments flew in all directions, steam, foam and vapor arose over the scene like a vast cloud, and what had once been a smooth surface of ice was now a vast chasm, at the bottom of which stood a huge body of agitated water, filled with floes.

Fast and furious rushed the Snow Bird along.

Out on the main she had dashed with the ice fairly falling from under the gleaming runners, and by the skill and cool courage of Frank not only was the boat and its crew saved, but the entire band of Esquimaux were rescued from an appalling doom.

A loud, glad shout of triumph pealed from every throat as the gallant boat bore them all safely to land, and a grim smile stole over Frank's face as he breathed a deep sigh, and said to Vaneyke:

"But two minutes more delay would have settled our fate."

"You managed the boat with consummate skill in avoiding the cracks, hills, and crevices, Frank," warmly replied the doctor, "and on that account wholly we owe you our lives!"

"By saving you, I saved myself."

"See what a terrible grinding we would have had if we fell in with that mass of ice! Nothing but powder would have been left of us had we passed between those jagged cakes of ice."

"Where is Barney?"

"Inside. Pomp is slowly but surely getting him full of whisky in the good-hearted effort to do him some good."

"Poor fellow! He was most gone when I found him!"

"Och, begorra, yez can't kill an Irishman!" said Barney, hobbling in at that juncture, with his face so patched up with court plaster that but little of the skin was to be seen. "Faix—hic—I'm ther toughest aould rooshter that iver—hic—kem out av a foight widout all ther feathers schkint out av his head an' tail."

"Why, here he is now!" laughed Frank, "and such a curiosity! Why, his left eye is all bunged up, his nose and upper lip are bloated, and it looks to me as if his ear was hit with a club. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Laugh at me!" growled Barney, waving a whisky flask in the air and gesticulating wildly; "but, bedad, it's—hic—not a bit av me courage is garn wid me handsome features. Whoop! I'm allers to ther—hic—fore. Shure, I could lick iver wan av these haythins, pot-bellied nagurs, if I had nothin' left but me fisht ad' toe-nails. If yez doubt ther word av a Shea come on, wan an' all av yez, an' I'll—whoop!"

Pomp had caught him by the back of the neck.

Barney was reeling unsteadily upon his legs, and he might have lurched forward and broken some of the Esquimaux' heads with his flask, if the coon hadn't hauled him ingloriously inside, slammed him into a bunk and left him there falling into a profound slumber.

The ice-boat dashed on under Frank's guidance, and headed for the south, to find a neigh-

boring tribe to whom the Esquimaux on board wanted to go for shelter and assistance.

Crowded to its utmost capacity by the men, women and children, the Snow Bird sped along under sails alone, as Frank had cut off the electric current.

The midnight sun gleamed down brightly, the crimson ice and snow glistened like millions of flashing diamonds, and a sharp, cold breeze belled the sails and drove the boat on.

Within a few hours they arrived at the encampment of the people for whom they were looking, and they came out in wonderment to meet it, when the distressed tribe was set upon the ice.

Explanations then followed, and the boat came to a pause.

This village consisted of half a dozen huts, but as soon as the villagers discovered what was wanted of them, new huts were built.

A man drew a circle in the ice with a stick, a dozen feet in diameter, and while others cut square blocks of snow and handed them to him, he built up the walls of the hut while standing inside of the ring, gradually tapering the blocks inward.

In this manner the domed roof was formed, the builder walling himself in, and at the end of the process, cutting a door to get out, after which melted snow water was thrown over the hut, where it froze and thus left the building as hard as ice.

Frank had no desire to remain there any longer.

So, when all the people were disembarked from the Snow Bird, he called the chief of the rescued tribe up, and asked him in Esquimaux:

"Is there any of your number whom you could send with us on the boat as a guide, to show us the way to the southward?"

"Not one of us know anything about the land south of here," he replied, "so it would not do any good for any one to go with you."

"How unfortunate! Then give us the right direction."

"The sun hangs almost directly in the north to-day."

"By keeping it astern then, we will keep going south?"

"Exactly. For many leagues ahead you will, I am told, find rough and hilly ice. When you pass it, you will come to a great plain which, 'tis said, covers an inland sea. Thence you can steer off at a right angle with your present course, and that will bring you to the eastern coast of Greenland."

These directions were meager, but they were valuable in lieu of none, so our friends took leave of the Esquimaux, and started off, with Pomp playing an old banjo he had brought with him, and the drunken Barney creating a fearful discord upon a rusty toned fiddle, which he had brought over from Ireland with him.

St. Malo and Beauvais of Brest had almost entirely recovered by this time.

They passed the ensuing day giving Frank a graphic description of their balloon journey from Spitzbergen, and all of their subsequent adventures, winding up the account by telling how the balloon had suddenly burst, causing their last descent, buoyed up by the ring of little balloons around the main globe.

Toward the hours of night on the following day, just after Frank was congratulating himself that he would make the southern journey in safety, a hurricane of rain and sleet came up, followed by a heavy fall of snow.

"Now we are in a sorry fix," despairingly said Frank. "Look at that dark sky! The sun is obscured. We don't know which way to go now."

"You had better get away from here," said the doctor, nervously. "The wind is blowing great chunks of ice around like hail, and knocking down heavy pinnacles that would crush us if once they struck the boat. Heavens, here it roars and howls! It's a wonder the boat stands it."

"Doctor, the sails are furling, and the machinery is stopped," said Frank, "yet we are flying along, swept by the gale, as if all the canvas was up. Our danger is greater than you imagine. I've got to keep the boat before the gale, and the darkness is increasing all the time. If we should run into an elevation or a hole, in the gloom, the Snow Bird would soon become a wreck!"

"Here—I'll start the search light!" said the old scientist, as he suited the action to the word. "Now we can see where we are going."

The broad, sharp streak of light flashed ahead of the boat for a mile, and lit up the dangerous path brilliantly.

St. Malo and Beauvais had turned in, and

Pomp was in one of the rear compartments regulating the electric heat so that a genial heat was diffused about the boat, and the bitter cold out of doors was not felt, while Barney remained on lookout in front of Frank.

The boat was scudding over the glistening ice under bare poles.

"If we could only find some sheltered nook," said Frank, in wistful tones, "I'd throw over the ice-anchors, and lay to until the gale blows itself out. But I don't see any chance to do it yet."

"Port yer helm, sor," said Barney, suddenly, as he peered hard ahead.

"Anything in the way?" anxiously asked Frank, complying.

"Shure an' it's nuthin' more'n some white min."

"White men?"

"Sailors, begob."

"I can't see them."

"There's a dozen, straight ahead."

"Oh, yes! By jove, there they are now!"

"Signalin' us, too, begorra, or I'm as blind as a bat!"

"They've got a tent under the lee of those ice blocks, too!"

"Haul to, sor, until we see what ther spalpeens wants av us."

"I wonder how they came to be cast away here," muttered Frank.

"Luck out, or, bedad, it's pasht thim we'll be afther floyin', sor."

"I can't stop the boat with the brake. Throw out the anchors, Barney."

Out of the door hobbled Barney, followed by the doctor, and clinging to the rail, to prevent the gale blowing them overboard, they loosened the anchors and let them go at the end of the long ropes that held them.

They dragged along across the ice astern, and finally held fast, bringing the Snow Bird to a pause close to the men.

Barney and the doctor came in, covered with snow.

The arc-lights blazing throughout the boat gave the men out on the ice a clear view of the inmates of the boat.

Grouping themselves in front of the boat, with rifles in their hands, their scant, tattered clothes fluttering in the wind, and a look of intense curiosity upon their faces, the strangers stood gaping at Frank.

He did not like the looks of the men at all.

They had on suits such as most ordinary sailors wear, and some wore coats, but they all had a forlorn, ragged appearance.

Their faces were dark, and proclaimed them to be Lascars, Danes and Swedes. Their features were haggard, their eyes hollow, their hair long and unkempt, and they had a wolfish, starved expression, denoting great suffering and privations.

"They are a hard, cruel looking lot of fellows," exclaimed Frank, after a sharp scrutiny of the men. "Hold the wheel, doctor, and I will go out and interview them. They seem to be in dire distress."

He opened the door and went out on deck.

"Hello, messmates!" said he. "Where do hail from?"

"Ve belong to de wrecked whaler, Golden Harpoon," said one of the men.

"Were you wrecked near here?"

"No—on dot coast vun mont' ago ve got nipped by de ice."

"Where is the rest of your crew?"

The man hesitated a moment, and then reluctantly replied:

"Dey was all dead. Dey die mit starvation und colt."

"That is a lie!" shouted another voice, and the next moment a poor, unfortunate wretch, with his hands bound behind his back, rushed into the glare of the electric lights, eliciting a cry of rage from the rest.

"What do you mean?" demanded Frank, eying the sailor pityingly.

"These men were mutineers. They murdered the captain and officers, stole the ship, and she went ashore in a storm. I and several others, who refused to join them in stealing the ship for its valuable cargo, were made prisoners and taken ashore. We had no food, and then—"

A cruel blow from one of the men interrupted the man and knocked him down, uttering a groan of intense agony.

"Shame!" exclaimed Frank angrily. "There is foul play here!"

"They killed my messmates!" raved the fallen man.

"You lie!" fiercely hissed the man who addressed Frank.

"And these cannibals cooked and eat them!" shrieked the poor wretch.

Another terrible blow and a dozen merciless kicks knocked him senseless.

The men, at a word of command from their leader, covered Frank with their guns.

"Exposed!" the man exclaimed. "But I don't care. You can take us all mit you on dot poat, or by dunder ve plow off your het! You hear?"

"Never! you inhuman fiends!" furiously cried Frank, filled with loathing and disgust. "I'd sooner perish than aid such monsters as you are!"

"Den fire at him, poys, und ve dake dis ice poat!" yelled the man.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SOME HOPE FOR SALVATION.

BARNEY and Dr. Vaneyke, in the pilot house of the anchored ice boat, were the only spectators of the hostile demonstrations of the twelve mutineers who raised their rifles against Frank, who stood out on deck.

They saw the castaways' brutal treatment of the poor sailor who had exposed their cannibalism, and at once realized that the men were up to some mischief, although they could not hear what was said.

"Alarm Pomp and the two Frenchmen and arm yourself!" said the doctor, hastily. "They are menacing Frank."

"Beggorra, the spalpeens is throyin' in a quare way ter git us ter lind thim ther helpin' hand," said Barney, hurrying out to obey.

Frank was not intimidated in the least by the men.

"Put down your arms!" he exclaimed, holding up his hand.

"Den you will dake us away to safe quarters?" eagerly demanded the Dane who had threatened to kill him.

"No! I tell you again I won't do anything for you for killing your poor, unfortunate messmates, and devouring them."

"But, *mine Gott!* ve has starfing."

"There is no excuse for man-eating by civilized people. Besides, the poor fellow who betrayed you, has branded you all as murderers of the captain and officers of the whaling ship Golden Harpoon. You committed the heinous crime willfully and maliciously, in order to steal the craft and its valuable cargo of whale oil. But God's retribution fell upon you swift and sure, for here you are, wrecked, helpless, and starving in the heart of Greenland, where you have wandered in hopes of finding succor."

"You would not leaf us here to die?"

"I absolutely refuse to take you with us! See—that poor fellow, whom you struck down just now, is dead! You are infernal rascals!"

"Den I keep my vord! Ve vhas desberate. Ve must haf help. Ve vill kill you, und dake dot ice poat away from you, or ve berish in dis storm! Aim, und fire at him, poys!"

The men had raised their rifles to their shoulders, when they heard the sharp clicking of the rifles in the hands of the crew of the Snow Bird, and saw half a dozen weapons pointed out the windows at them.

A grim smile of satisfaction crossed Frank's face.

He knew that his friends were defending him. Addressing the Lascars, Danes, and Swedes, he exclaimed:

"Don't fire! It is as much as your lives are worth to do so!"

"Dem are goin' to fire back!" hissed the Dane in alarm.

"Not one of you will live a moment if you don't clear out!"

"Lower de guns!" said the Dane hastily to his companions.

They obeyed him, for they saw the danger they were in.

Frank pointed ahead, and in cold, concise tones he shouted:

"About face, and march!"

Without a word the men stole away like a band of shadows, and soon vanished in the gloom of the storm.

Frank felt justified in thus abandoning the band of murderers.

"It is retributive justice," he muttered. "They deserve a far worse punishment than this. But I have no heart to have them hung!"

"Am dey gwine away?" asked Pomp, coming out just then.

"They have disappeared. Will you call some one to remain on guard, and you and I can alight, dig a grave for that poor sailor, and bury him so that the wolves won't devour his body."

The darky did as he was directed, and when he joined Frank he carried a spade and an ax, with which to make the grave.

Disembarking from the anchored boat, they faced the powerful wind, and with fluttering clothes made their way through the blinding snow to the place where the half-covered body of the dead sailor lay, close to one of the ice-hills.

He was as rigid as iron.

Marks of maltreatment all over his body showed plainly with what brutality he met at the hands of the mutineers.

"Poor wretch!" sympathetically said Frank, as he sadly viewed the prostrate body lying before him. "It scarcely needed the cruel blow they dealt to end his unhappy life he was so far gone."

"Heah am a hole in de ice, sah," said Pomp. "I'll frow out de pieces ob ice, an' den we kin lay him in yere, an' cober him up, wifout de trouble ter cut a hole."

He excavated the indentation, and they lifted the dead man up and laid him in his last resting place, then Frank covered him with a shroud of soft snow, on top of which Pomp heaped a lot of broken ice in a compact mound.

While they were so employed, they did not see several dark shadowy figures stealthily creeping up behind the ice boat, where no light was reflected from the windows.

They were some of the castaway mutineers.

Two anchor ropes were stretched out astern of the boat, drawn to a tight tension by the force of the wind blowing against the Snow Bird, and the skulking sailors clung to them as if to prevent the hurricane blowing them away.

Hardly had the mound over the body of the dead sailor been raised, however, when the sneaking men at the ropes slashed their knives over the cables and severed them in two.

Liberated, the boat suddenly dashed away with the wind, and left Frank and Pomp alone at the mercy of the mutineers.

In a moment the electric boat vanished in the veil of downfalling snow, and the two startled men looked up.

Back of them stood the dim, shadowy outlines of the sailors aiming their rifles at them with deadly precision.

"Hands up!" yelled the Dane, who commanded them.

"We are caught!" exclaimed Frank, in dismay.

"Oh, golly! Dey done cut de boat loose!" gasped Pomp.

"Surrender!" continued the Dane, in threatening tones.

"Doan' yo' gib in ter dem, Massa Frank!" exclaimed Pomp.

"They outnumber us six to one!" said the inventor despairingly.

"I doan' care a blame if dey am sixty ter one."

"Brave fellow. I'll give them a tussle then."

"Hab yo' got any weapons, sah?"

"Nothing but this spade, Pomp."

"An' I ain't got nuthin' but dis ax."

"Fools! Mofe hant or foot, an' ve fire ad you!" shouted the Dane.

"Shoot away, you treacherous hound. Come on, Pomp!"

"Ki, dar! Clar de track! De ole bullgine am acomin'!"

With a run, carried along by the strong gusts of wind, they both made a dash for their enemies, right in the very thickest of them, and directly in the face of the worst danger.

"Fire!" roared the Dane.

Every man pulled the trigger, and a dozen reports pealed out, when down went Frank and his black friend, prone on the ice.

"Dey are shot?" gleefully shouted the Dane.

"Not yet," answered Frank, as he and Pomp arose.

Their enemies were amazed, for they did not suspect that the two cute adventurers had fallen to escape the flying bullets, as soon as the command to fire at them had been given.

"Broke dar heads, Massa Frank!" yelled the coon, charging on the startled men with his ax uplifted. "Shovel dem off de earf!"

They struck the mutineers like an avalanche, and in a moment their weapons were flying about, creating as much devastation in the ranks of the ruffians as loaded pistols would.

Right and left they struck out, and every time a resounding blow was struck, a man went down with a groan.

The onslaught was fierce and irresistible, the coolness and courage of the two men was wonderful, and the mutineers for a moment had to retreat to save themselves.

They soon rallied, however, and clubbing their rifles, they attacked Frank and Pomp with such overwhelming determination, that they were both knocked down and made prisoners before they could defend themselves.

"Le' go ob me!" roared Pomp, as he rolled and kicked and punched at his antagonists furiously. "I ain't a-gwine ter gib in, yo' heah!"

"Hit dat feller on de head mit a gun!" growled the Dane.

"Yo' break yo' gun ef yo' do!" threatened Pomp.

"Keep still, as long as they've got us," said Frank, wisely.

"Oh, Lawdy, how kin I, when I'se so bil'n', sah?"

The sailors bound the two captives, and then the Dane exclaimed:

"Take dem away from here, into de grotto, or dat boat vill come back putty soon quick, an' mebbe dey whip us."

"What do you intend to do to us?" asked Frank.

"I dell you. Ve must got on dot poat. If ve schtay here quick, ve die mitout some food. If dose landmen of yours don't make dat ve go on board, ve kill you—if dey let us go, ve don't."

"You mean to use us as hostages, eh?"

"Ve use you so dat ve safe our own lifes."

The mutineers thereupon dragged their two captives into a grotto where they had been living, and a couple of them brought in the fellows who had been injured in the fight, while several remained outside on guard, to watch for the boat's return.

The wounded men began to rave for vengeance upon Frank and the coon as soon as they saw them lying bound upon the floor in their midst, and one of them was about to hurl a block of ice at them, when the Dane stopped him.

"Vait!" said the man, warningly. "You kill him, und his vriends von't dake us away, but kill us all. You vill haff rewege for dot crack on de het pruddy soon quick."

The man grumbled and growled, and our two friends felt much relieved at the intercession, for they were so bound that had the spiteful fellow flung the ice, it would have struck them, as they would have been powerless to have escaped it.

Half an hour passed uneventfully by, then one of the guards ran in and announced that he had seen the search light of the ice boat bearing down upon the place occupied by the grotto.

Instantly every one was upon the alert.

The Dane went out, and stood like a statue before the grotto, watching the boat, as it came creeping up to the spot, in the teeth of the gale, under the propulsion of its driving wheels.

Presently the gleam of the search light fell upon him, and when the boat came in hailing distance, it paused.

"Hello, there!" shouted the doctor, through the open window of the pilot-house. "Did you cut our anchor lines?"

"Yes!" replied the Dane, coolly.

"What did you do it for?"

"So dat we catch your two men without your interference."

"Ah! You have got Frank and Pomp in your power?"

"Dey are in dis cafe."

"Release them at once, or we will attack you!"

"You dake us on dat poat, or we will kill dem—see!"

"So that is your game, eh?"

"Dat is vot's de medder."

"Bring Mr. Reade out, so I can question him."

"Werry goot. You soon vill see dot I dell de truth."

The man spoke in Danish to one of his companions, who at once dragged Frank from the cave, where the doctor could see him.

"Frank! This is unlucky! What shall we do?" said the doctor.

"Take the miscreants on board. They have got the upper hand."

"Have they hurt you?"

"Not in the least. They are only actuated by self interest."

"All right—let them come on board."

"You heard what he said?" remarked Frank to the Dane.

"Remember dat you die, if dey dry to hurt us."

"Don't be alarmed. I am aware of the conditions. Go ahead now."

They carried Frank, Pomp, and their wounded friends on board the ice-boat, and entered

the rear compartment, where Barney met them with a scowl, and asked of Frank:

"What shall we do now?"

"Recover the anchors and remain here."

"If these bastes harrums yez, let us know, sor."

"Have no fear. Only look out they don't get entire possession of the boat."

"It's not a wink, av schleep I'll do ontill we are rid av them, sor."

"Go away from here!" said the Dane, with a dark scowl.

"Wid pleasure," replied Barney. "Shure, ther lucks av yez makes me sick."

He left the compartment and went out to find the anchors, all the mutineers crowding into the kitchen.

"Have you got some food here?" eagerly asked the Dane.

"Plenty," replied Frank. "Look in that port locker."

"Goot. Get it oudt, poys," said the Dane, in tones of delight.

The hungry men complied, while Barney fastened the ropes to the anchors again, which he just then had succeeded in finding.

"Have you got a compass with you?" queried Frank, eagerly.

"No, we lost it," was the disappointing reply.

"Pshaw! Then we can't do you any good, as we have none."

"Vot! Are you lost, too?"

"We have been for nearly a year."

"Mebbe dere ish von yet on board of de ship Golden Harpoon."

"Could you guide us to her?"

"Yah. Ven de storm plows away, ve show you de vay dere."

"Then there is yet some hope for us," said Frank, gladly.

The food having been produced by this time, was distributed among the ravenous men who began to eagerly devour it, interrupting the conversation.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A DESPERATE MAN'S STRUGGLES.

"WHOOOP! give it to him! Pound ther spalpeens well, docthor dear. Now, St. Malo, ye aould bullfrog aiter, pulverize ther bastes."

Bang! went the door open that led into the kitchen.

Half of the mutineers had been sleeping when Barney inaugurated an attack upon them, and they were taken by surprise.

Some of them were lying on the floor beside Frank, Pomp and the wounded men, only the two fellows on guard being upon their feet when Barney, Vaneyke, St. Malo and Beauvais rushed in, armed with pistols, to wrest Frank from their power.

They jumped up and made a confused effort to defend themselves, but our friends were determined to drive them off the boat.

Barney was armed with his blackthorn stick, and the way he swung it around and banged the mutineers over their heads would have done credit to the wildest Irishman at Donnybrook fair.

"Hurroo!" yelled he delightedly, as he let drive a welt that knocked the Dane down like a ten-pin. "Over yez goes. Arrah! but it's aisy an' gintle I am wid yez. Plug the divil out ay thim, docthor. Faith, there goes another wan. Who'll thread on ther tail av me coat? Give me the hardest head, an', be heavens, it's in two I'll crack it wid wan thump."

A fearful scene of confusion was going on, every one mixed up in a struggling mass, and our friends drove the panic-stricken crew back against the door.

One of them opened it and rushed out on deck.

That was all that saved the rest from utter annihilation, for it gave them a chance to get away.

They jumped from the boat, one after another, followed by several harmless pistol-shots, and the victorious aggressors seized upon the fallen rascals and flung them all off, save the leader of the mutineers, after their companions. Frank and Pomp were set free.

"Bully fo' us!" yelled the coon, wild with delight. "Gimme a club till I hit some one! Barney, yo' can't kill dem wifout me!"

"Faix, they're all gam but ther ringleader, an' he's that sinseless it wouldn't be felt if I wuz ter punch him in ther jure," regretfully said the Irishman. "Och, but ther shindy wor too short an' schwate ter last. Does any wan here want a baitin'? Shure, it wor rusty I wuz gittin' for ther want av a ruction."

"A complete victory," laughed Frank, an ad-

miring look in his sparkling blue eyes as he bent his glance upon Barney. "I didn't expect it. But I'm glad you drove them away."

"What do you want us to keep this Dane for?" asked Vaneyke.

"He can guide us to the Golden Harpoon."

"Ahl you hope to find a compass on board the whaler?"

"Precisely so, and this rascal knows the way back to her."

"Then I'll bind him so he can't get away till we make use of him."

"Good! The storm has almost spent its fury now."

"By to-morrow, Frank, we can get under sail again."

"Do you see anything of this fellow's friends?"

"No; all have disappeared but the wounded men, and even they are crawling away after their friends."

"The ravenous wretches have devoured most all our food. But never mind. Set a guard and we will turn in to get some rest. We have hard work and a long journey before us, doctor."

St. Malo and Beauvais went on guard and the rest turned in and slept until the storm had all cleared away.

On the following day all the mutineers had vanished, the sun shone out from a clear sky, the ice was covered with deep snow and the gale moderated to a gentle breeze.

The Dane had recovered his senses and found himself chained up in the kitchen at the mercy of the ice boat crew.

He was savage over the prospect, but his rage did him no good.

Barney and Pomp started off on the trail of a moose which one of the Frenchmen had discovered, to replenish their larder, and Frank went into the kitchen, and accosted his prisoner with:

"The tide of war has turned in my favor, Dane. You now are my prisoner. When I was yours you threatened to kill me if I did not meet your expectations. No doubt you meant to keep your threat. Now it is my turn. Unless you guide us to the wrecked whaler I shall certainly blow your brains out. You now have your choice: Obey me, or die!"

"I do vot you vant!" sulkily growled the man.

"Very well. As soon as my friends return with food for our breakfast we start off under your guidance. Woe betide you if you practice any treachery upon us. Do you understand?"

"You can drust me," quietly replied the captive.

Within an hour Barney and the darky came back with the moose.

It was a fine, big beast, and had given them a good deal of trouble, but a shot from the darky's rifle brought it down.

Pomp cooked them a good breakfast, and then the Dane was brought into the pilot house and secured there.

The canvas was hoisted, and Frank steered the boat away after the anchor had been taken up on deck again.

Pointing to a heap of icy hills of peculiar formation, and keeping the northern sun dead astern, the captive told Frank to go around the base of the hills, follow that track to the right, and ultimately they would reach the sea-shore.

It was a long, rough run to the foot hills of ice, but the boat ultimately reached them, and went around as the guide directed.

After a mile of wild, barren country was gone over, and no sign of the sea was seen after nearly a day's travel.

Frank's suspicions of the Dane became aroused.

They were in a grandly-wild and picturesque locality, but as they proceeded the surroundings began to take on a strangely-familiar look.

"Do you know, doctor," said Frank at last, "that this place looks very much to me like the neighborhood of the hills down which we slid followed by the avalanche some time ago."

"Just the idea that occurred to me, Frank," assented the doctor.

There was an evil smile upon the Dane's face. Frank detected it, and his former suspicions increased.

"See here, you dog, you have been playing me false!" he exclaimed.

The Dane started, and the color forsook his face for a moment.

He looked as if he wanted to refrain from utterance, but he could not withstand the temptation to say what was on his mind.

"You t'ink I fool mit you?" he asked sardonically.

"I am positive that you have deceived us somehow."

"Och, vot makes you t'ink dot?"

"Because it looks to me as if we have been running around in a circle and have come back to where we were several days ago."

"Vell, you vhas righd!"

"What! You dare admit that you have led us astray?"

"You vhas been going in some directions vot I don't know something of."

"Do you mean to say that you didn't know where we were going?"

"No. I didn't know dat mineself."

"Then what did you misdirect us for?"

"So you been worser off as you vhas before."

"Is this malice-spite-vengeance on your part?"

"So dot I git schquare mit you for vot you done by mine friends."

"You are rash-reckless-mad, to trifle with us this way."

"Dot vhas 'cause I don't care vetter I lief or vetter I die now."

Frank and the doctor exchanged blank looks of utter dismay.

The wily Dane had cleverly tricked them, under the pretext of saving their lives, and now, instead of improving their position, they were just as bad off as they were before!

A hard, stern and remorseless feeling of anger came over Frank.

"If we keep you with us any longer," he exclaimed fiercely, "there is no telling what you may next attempt to do to injure us. I will soon decide your fate for this last piece of treachery."

"Vhas you goin' ter shoot me?" tremblingly asked the man.

"I shall leave the decision of what shall become of you to my friends. They shall be your jury, and I your judge, after they have passed sentence upon you."

"Have you all heard what has passed?" asked the doctor, turning to the rest, who stood listening and looking on.

"We have," replied Barney.

"Then let us retire into yonder room and agree upon a verdict."

"You shall be the foreman, doctor."

"Very well, Frank. Now, friends, come on."

They all went into the back room, leaving Frank and the prisoner alone together, the boat standing up in the wind.

When the two Frenchmen, Barney and Pomp were seated, the doctor said:

"You are all aware of the treachery practiced upon us by the Dane, and know that he is not only a cowardly murderer and cannibal, but that he has also made every effort to kill and injure us. Now such a man is too dangerous to leave at large, carrying on his infernal practices, and it devolves upon us to get rid of him."

"Mr. Chairman, may I have ther flure?" asked Barney arising.

"Take de wall an' ceilin' too, while yo' am at it," said Pomp with a grin.

"I am anxious to hear from each one as to our disposal of him," said Vaneyke.

"Then begorra, I'd hit him wid an ax," said Barney, sitting down again.

"Any other suggestions?" queried the professor.

"Le' me butt him in de stomach jist once—I'll knock him ter glory hallelujah wid one bunk," said Pomp earnestly.

"That's two," smiled the doctor. "Now, St. Malo!"

"Monsieur, eet eez wiz great sorrow zat I say eet, but eef you will let me out open ze back of hees neck wiz a razair, an' introduce one of ze electric wiairs ovair ze medulla oblongada, wiz wong shock of ze battery I will reduce ze man to one—vat you call him—ze stiff, by gar!"

"What mode of punishment does Beauvais propose?"

St. Malo questioned his friend in French, and then replied:

"Beauvais say zat ze best way eez to blow heez head wiz a revolver."

"And I am in favor of hanging the wretch. Now each one of us has a diversity of opinion on the subject. Let us cast a ballot as to which mode of death we shall follow, as you all seem anxious to kill him."

Before this plan could be put into practice they heard a scuffle out in the pilot-house, and they all jumped up and ran in.

The room was empty, but the door stood open.

Out on deck struggled Frank and the prisoner in each other's arms, for the Dane had by

some means managed to get rid of the ropes that bound him and attacked Frank.

"Hello!" gasped the amazed doctor, "look there!"

"Be heavens it's free he's got!"

"Parbleu!" exclaimed St. Malo. "Ze boat eez going—look—look!"

The Snow Bird had begun to slide off sideways to the edge of a cliff they were on, formed by a level plateau that arose above the creviced ice far down below them.

Pomp saw their danger and grasped the wheel.

"Golly!" he muttered. "In less'n fo' minutes we'd abeen ober!"

He gave the wheel a turn, putting the boat before the wind, and drove it away from that dangerous location.

Frank was fighting hard out on deck, for the Dane struggled with the ferocity of a madman to get away, as he knew that his life would have to pay the death penalty for the various crimes our friends knew he was guilty of.

Back and forth, to and fro they fought, staggering all over the deck, up at one moment, down the next, straining every muscle, and striving by every means to gain the advantage.

"You may fight and fight," panted Frank, grimly, "but you will have a tough time of it to get away from me."

"I break your back on de railing," hissed the Dane.

He had gotten Frank against the rail, and, pushed him over with all his might, when Frank let himself go, and they both fell from the boat down to the ice, where they rolled over and over, locked in a tight embrace.

The doctor and the rest ran out on deck.

"Look out, Frank!" shouted Vaneyke, warningly. "You are close to the edge of that precipice, and may fall over."

Alarmed, he and Barney jumped from the boat and ran for the struggling pair, who, by this time, were upon their feet.

Frank glanced around.

He saw that the doctor's warning was alarmingly true.

He was struggling in dangerously close proximity to the edge of the ledge, and already the ice was breaking and crumbling beneath their feet.

"Back with you!" he cried, sharply, trying to force the Dane away.

"No! If I must die, it may as vell be dis vay as any other," was the fierce reply, "an' I haf de satisfaction of takin' you mit me."

Struggle as hard as he might, Frank could not drag the man away, and with dogged perseverance and a devilish persistence, he kept dragging Frank nearer and nearer the abyss.

With cries of alarm the crew of the ice-boat saw his purpose, and Vaneyke and Barney rushed toward them.

But ere they had gone a dozen paces, a cry burst from Frank.

The ice gave away from beneath his feet, and went down in the gulf with a loud crash.

Locked in his enemy's deathly embrace, Frank fell over with the ice, and the next instant the struggling pair vanished from the sight of the horrified spectators.

CHAPTER XXX.

AT THE STONE WALL.

"HELP! Help, or I will perish!" This wild appealing cry rang out over the icy scene in thrilling accents.

It brought a sensation of glad surprise to the minds of the crew of the Snow Bird, for it came from over the ledge where Frank had fallen locked in the arms of the desperate Dane with whom he had been fighting.

"Bedad, it's the voice av Frank himself!" shouted Barney gladly.

"There can be no mistake about it," assented Vaneyke.

Pomp and the two Frenchmen were yet on the deck of the ice-boat, which was tacking up and down under full sail.

Running to the edge of the ledge, the doctor flung himself flat on the ice, and peered down into the yawning abyss below.

"There he is!" he cried.

"Safe?" eagerly questioned Barney.

"Ay, but our trial of the Dane is now needless."

"D'yer see ther spalpeen, docthor dear?"

"Yes. Far down below. He lies dead on the ice."

"I'm glad av it, Heaven fergive me fer sayin' ther same."

"Frank did not fall all the way down. He is on a jutting ledge."

"Wait, an' I'll git a rope to pull him up, so I will, sor."

"Make haste. He is in a slippery, dangerous spot, and may fall off."

"Pomp!" yelled Barney, waving his arms. "Come here wid ye!" The darky drove the boat over to the Irishman stood, and Barney hastily climbed on board, exclaiming:

"Give us a long rope till I save Masther Frank."

Then he dove in through a door, procured what he wanted in the store-room, and swearing at the Dane under his breath, for so treacherously luring them back to the place where the avalanche had pursued them, instead of showing the way to the wrecked whaler, Golden Harpoon, he ran back to the doctor.

They lowered the rope down to Frank, and shouted to him.

He caught hold of the rope and came up hand over hand, not waiting for his friends to pull him up, for the distance he had fallen was not more than twenty feet.

To the amazement of his friends, he was not injured.

"How do you account for your good fortune?" curiously asked Vaneyke.

"Locked in each other's arms we fell down on the ledge," said Frank, "and by extreme good luck the Dane was underneath. He got a hard blow, and the breath was knocked out of me, but his body saved me from serious injury. I rebounded from his body, and he fell off the ledge down to where he now lies dead. For my part, I landed on the ledge, clung to the ice, and recovering my breath I called for help."

"Shure, an' he's as dead as a door nail," said Barney.

"No wonder, for he fell a great distance," replied Frank.

"What are we to do now?" queried Vaneyke.

"Start off in search of the sea shore and find the wrecked ship."

"Then come—let us get on board and retrace our course."

Getting on board of the Snow Bird, the rest warmly congratulated Frank over his lucky escape, and the electric ice-boat was turned around, and sailed away back the way she came, under a full head of billowy canvas, and with a spanking breeze blowing.

Returning to the hills around which she had come, the boat was sent off to the westward, by keeping the northern sun on her starboard quarter.

The ice was very rough and broken for a number of miles, and then the boat descended a deep valley, through which ran a tremendous glacier, covered with moraines of semi-circular shape.

"These moraines," said Vaneyke, "are the most singular things about glaciers. The ones on this glacier are nothing but walls of stone, and do not contain any rubbish and dirt like the ones in Switzerland. They are formed like the froth on a glass of beer, no doubt, the forward movement of the glaciers bringing the stones and rocks up through the crevices to the surface from the bottom of the glaciers. They look much like stone walls built by the hands of men. There is an unusually big one ahead of us now."

The boat was sweeping toward a curved wall some ten feet in height composed of massive boulders and stones that varied in size to the dimensions of mere pebbles.

When the Snow Bird came within a dozen yards of it the crew heard a peculiar bellowing and roaring sound, and Frank brought his boat to a pause, with the exclamation:

"That sounds like the voice of a seal!"

"Such creatures are not generally found upon glaciers," said the doctor.

"I know it, and that's what arouses my curiosity."

"The noise came from behind the moraine, didn't it?"

"Yes, I am going to alight and see what sort of creature it is."

He tendered the wheel to the doctor, grasped his rifle which hung on a rack in back of him on the wall, and left the boat, which stood up in the wind with fluttering canvas.

Hearing a footstep behind him, he glanced back and saw Barney who had followed after him, armed with a rifle.

"Shure I thought yez moight want company," said the Irishman, half apologetically, "so I thought I'd folly ye, sor."

"Then come around this end of the moraine," said Frank, who was skirting the base of the stony wall to the right. "The ice is rough on the

other side, and the sound seems to be on this end."

The moraine was nearly half a mile long.

As they started off on the side designated by Frank they were suddenly startled by hearing a human voice shouting, and they came to a pause, and glanced at each other.

"Wot ther deuce is it?" muttered Barney.

"Certainly not the voice of an Esquimaux," replied Frank.

"Begorra, it's in throuble ther spalpeen is!"

"Hark! There, he's yelling again!"

Once more the frantic, appealing cries pealed out on the other side of the stone wall, and it was accompanied by a loud clatter of ice, and the barking, snarling and growling of dogs.

The voice of the seal was now changed to a hoarse growling and roaring, and Frank glanced off at the end of the moraine.

"It is a sea lion!" he exclaimed. "The beast and the man must be fighting. Just hear what a racket they are making. The end of the moraine is a long distance off. Before we can reach it, and get around to the man's aid, it may be too late."

"Faith, ther man ain't a Yankee."

"No! Come—follow me. We'll take a short cut."

"How?" queried Barney, breathlessly.

"Up over the stone wall."

And so saying, Frank went clambering up on the rocks.

It was a hard climb for them, as the stones were covered with a coating of ice and snow that made them as slippery as glass.

But by persevering and paying no attention to the bruises they got, after a struggle they reached the top, and peered over.

Below them was a smooth plane of ice.

At the base of the moraine a gaping fissure was seen.

On one side of it stood an Esquimaux sledge and team, while close by lay a man in fur clothing, struggling to get away from a huge sea lion, into the back of which a harpoon was thrust deeply, the beast evidently intent upon killing the man.

He was a short, fat little fellow, what little there was to be seen of his face showing a dark complexion, and he was evidently unarmed, for he was vainly using his hands to force the sea lion away from him.

The enormous creature, goaded to fury by the wound of the harpoon, had a portion of its body upon the man, holding him down, and its gaping mouth was raised over the poor fellow's head.

"Fire, Barney, it is going to kill him!" cried Frank.

"Bad cess to its sowl, here she goes."

The two rifles belched fire, smoke and lead, and the sea lion gave utterance to a fearful roar and recoiled, wildly beating its flippers upon the ice, evidently wounded by the shots.

"We have hit it!" said Frank.

"More power to our elbows, we have that."

"The man is getting up. Give it another shot!"

"I'll ventilate its brains this toime, so I will." Bang, bang! thundered two more shots in quick succession, and as the roaring animal fell over upon the ice, Frank cried:

"Well done! We've nearly finished it. How strange to find that creature here! They are only common on the other side of the continent off Alaska. And how this fellow got here is a mystery, unless he came up out of that hole in the ice below us."

When the man got upon his feet, he glanced up at the two men on top of the moraine in blank astonishment, and the dogs began to bark at them and show their teeth.

"Hello, stranger," cried Frank, "are you all right now?"

The man answered in a strange language, gesticulated to signify that he did not understand them, and seeing that the sea lion was not yet dead, he ran up to it and grasped the harpoon.

He was in a towering rage at the beast.

Withdrawing the weapon from its body and uttering a furious exclamation, he drew it back and plunged it into the expiring animal again and again.

The sea lion fell over dead.

Then only was the man's anger satiated.

He glanced at the beast which had nearly taken his life, and then, shouldering his harpoon, he walked over to the stone wall and motioned for Frank to come down.

"Perhaps he can show us the way to the coast," said Frank.

"But, bedad, it's ther furrin language he schpakes," said Barney, with a troubled look,

"an' it's only an encyclopedia as could under-stand him."

"What is the matter, Frank?" shouted Vaneyke from the ice-boat at this juncture, as the Snow Bird glided over to the moraine.

"Steer around the stone wall and you'll see," replied Frank.

"Faith, ther boat'll git forninst these schtones afore we could cloimb down onter ther glacier agin," said Barney.

He was right, for the boat sped along very fast while they began the slow descent over the slippery stones.

Before they got to the bottom they came to a circle of the stones, and were going over an oval top to it when it fell through.

Down they went into a hollow space among the rocks, and to their amazement they found themselves within an artificially made chamber of stone filled with boxes and barrels.

The light of day streamed down in the place through the hole in the broken roof and disclosed an American flag flung on top of a heap of boxes standing piled on one side.

"Why, we are in a cairn, or stowage place for food, left by the crew of some American vessel, as this flag testifies," said Frank.

"Wot in thunder's in these boxes an' bar'ls?" queried Barney.

"Canned food. Just what we needed."

"Then, bejabbers, it wor ther grub that furriner wor affther whin ther sea lion got onter him," said Barney speculatively.

"Undoubtedly so," assented Frank. "It is a God-send to us, for our provisions are nearly exhausted. But we are in a trap."

"How d'yer mane, sor?"

"We can't get out of this well-like place very easily. The door is sealed up on the outside with frozen ice, and the top is so high up that we can't reach it, unless you can stand on my shoulders."

"Faith, our friends'll dig us out," said Barney.

"They didn't see us fall in, and so don't know where we are."

"Won't the furriner tell them?"

"Maybe so," assented Frank.

"If he don't, faith, we can't schtarve ter death here."

"Hark! He is yelling outside in terror again."

"Shure, it do be soundin' as if he wor howlin' at his dogs."

"Yes. There is the sound of his sledge grating on the ice."

"Och, ther spalpeen is mebbe afeerd av ther oice boat."

"Here, let me get upon your shoulders and look out."

The Irishman braced himself and Frank climbed upon his body, caught hold of the top walls of the cairn and pulled himself up out of the food store house.

To his surprise he saw the man sitting in his sledge, dashing away at full speed across the glacier, goading on his dogs with voice and lash, while ever and anon he glanced back over his shoulder at the ice-boat, which was in pursuit of him.

"Doctor!" yelled Frank, at the top of his voice, "come back!"

"Hurrah! Dar he am on top ob de stone wall!" shouted Pomp, who stood on the deck of the boat. "Turn back, doctah, turn back, sah."

The boat went around in a circle, and returned with a free wind to the stone wall, down from which Frank had climbed.

He told them what happened, and called for an ax, when he cut open the cairn door of ice, released Barney, and they all went to work and transferred the boxes and barrels of food to the boat.

The man in the sledge was yet in sight.

"After him," said Frank, pointing at the stranger. "He may lead us to the coast and prove to be our salvation. He is afraid of the boat evidently, but we must catch him. Crack on top-sails and sheet home the fore stay sail, boys!"

Up fluttered the extra canvas, and away shot the boat to overhaul the dog sledge which was rapidly speeding on far in advance of them.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE GOLDEN HARPOON.

"SLACKEN away the fore-sail, trim in the jib-sheet, and let go the mains'l!" cried Frank to the negro and Irishman who were out on deck. "We are close up with the sledge now, boys, and must not run it down."

"What do you intend to do?" asked the doctor.

"Let him just keep his lead and no more. In

that manner we can bring up at some definite destination, as he will doubtless head for a place of safety he knows of, to get away from the boat in which he stands in awe."

"Barney, yo' le' go de fo'-s'l sheet line, an' I drap the mains'l," exclaimed the darky, running aft. "We'se gwine fo' ter run undah de jib alone, I'specs, onless she doan' git steerage way. Gosh a'mighty, we'se a'most atop ob de sleigh."

"Shiver me top loights, it's schlack it is," replied the Irishman with a grin, as he unfastened the sheet rope from the port-cleats, and sent the boom swinging off to leeward.

"He will get cut in two by the runners!" exclaimed Frank, in startled tones, as he saw the coon vanish under the boat.

He gave the wheel a sudden turn.

It jerked the boat around at an angle with its course.

Had he not calculated so quickly where the coon fell, one of the sternmost runners would have gone over Pomp's body.

It just grazed his heels.

Then the boat was gone from over him in a flash.

The coon's raised hand came in contact with the rudder post, and his fingers closed over it

"Murdah!" yelled Pomp. "Help, help, help! I'se gittin' skinned! All de front am tored offer my clo's. Yo' heah? Oh, holey gee! Stop me!"

There was a belaying-pin rack against the side of the deck-house, on which some ropes were coiled, and Barney seized a piece, dropped it over the stern and yelled:

"Grab that, ye spalpeen, an' it's up I'll be afther pullin' yer."

Pomp did so with one hand, and wrapping it around his wrist, cried:

"H'ist away dar, or I'se a dead niggah!"

Barney hauled away, and soon got him up on the deck.



Frank and Vaneyke began to paddle. But only a few strokes. The kyacks fell over sidewise, and the next instant floated keel upwards, Frank and Vaneyke hauging head downward in under water.

"An' heah go de gaff," said Pomp, letting down the big sail.

They both darted up forward, hauled away on the jib-line and making it fast, loosened the stay-sail, pulled on the down-haul, and the forward canvas came flying down.

Only the fore-sail and jib were left standing. Pomp went out on the bow-sprit, and furled the stay sail, while Barney fastened down the main sheet.

They already had top-sails down.

The boat ran along slower now, only the jib drawing, but the boat made so much leeway that Frank had to cry:

"Let go the jib! The wind is shifting around to the north and we can run free now."

Barney let the jib-sheet fly.

As it sprang out ahead of the boat in a great bulging mass to the starboard, the fore-sail jibed over to port and she ran wing-and-wing, hotly in pursuit of the dog sledge.

Pomp was directly in the way of the jib as it went out, and the leech caught him a whack that sent him flying overboard.

"Murdah!" he yelled, and then he struck the ice directly in front of the boat, and it passed over him.

like a vise, when with a sudden jerk he was dragged along with the flying boat.

"Stop de boat!" he yelled, as he went skating along over the smooth ice upon his stomach.

"Yo's a-rakin' me from bow ter stern. Oh! Och! Lord amassy! I'se gittin' tored ter pieces, I is!"

"Och, it's ther illigant belly-whopper yez have taken," said Barney, with a broad grin, as he leaned over the taff-rail, and glancing down at his agonized friend, saw that he sustained no fatal injury.

"Help me up out ob dis!" roared Pomp, frantically, as a lump of ice he went over made him feel as if he was being cut in two. "Fo' de lan'—oh—sakes, cawn't yo' see I'se gittin' scraped ter deff?"

"Bedad, it's sorry I am fer yer. Give us yer hand."

"How kin I reach 'way up dar, honey? Frow me a rope."

"Shall I dhrop it aroun' yer neck an' make yer lave go yer han's?"

"Hey, yo' blame ole chimpanzee, why doan' yo' do somefin'?"

"I will. Ter ind yer misery it's a bar av iron I'll dhrop on yer head."

The poor coon was a pitiful sight, for the front of his clothing was torn to shreds, and his flesh would have been in the same state if he had been left much longer dragging over the ice.

"Why didn't yo' yank me right up outer dar?" he roared, shivering with cold and glaring balefully at the grinning Irishman.

"Faith, it wor a shame ter spile so good a circus," chuckled Barney; "an' if it wasn't that I wanted a good sucker ter belt in ther gob now an' then be way of divarsion, shure I'd a left yez there fer an Esquimau wake."

"Yo' did, hey? Den jes' see how yo' like gittin' friz!" growled Pomp, as he seized a bucket of salted water from a rack and flung it all over Barney, who sputtered and danced and raved wildly:

"Be heavens, it's an' oicicle yez will make av me!"

"Yah, yah, yah!" chuckled Pomp delightedly. "Want anodder one, chile?"

"Man overboard!" yelled Barney. "It's dhrownt I am!"

Pomp took three more pails of water, one by one from the rack, and let the contents fly all over Barney in quick succession.

"Swim out!" he roared. "Yo's ober yo' head!"

"Bad cess ter yer!" howled the wild Irishman. "It's hash I'll make av yer gorilla's face, so I will! Shtop! fer ther love av terbaccy, shtop! or it's a livin' oiceberg I'll soon be!"

"G'lang! d'ye fink I'se gwine ter miss dis yer treat?"

"Then, bedad, it's a corpse I'll make av yer!" roared Barney, as he broke off a number of icicles from the boat, and began to bombard the coon with them as fast as they could be fired!

As one of the missiles caught him on the

He made an effort to get up, but he stuck fast by the seat of his pants.

Then he made another effort, but it was a failure.

"Och, it's glued here I am," he wailed.

"Reckon dar's gwine ter be fun den," laughed Pomp.

He went inside, attached two poles of an electric current to the metal roof, and turned on a current that made Barney jump.

"Whoop!" he yelled, as his legs flew up in the air. "I'm kilt!"

He struggled and squirmed, twisted and turned, and tore with might and main in a mad

suit of the man in the dog sledge, who kept urging on his team in the effort to get away.

The boat ascended an elevation presently, giving them a clear view of the country several miles in all directions, and Frank's face suddenly lit up with an eager smile, and he cried:

"Look, doctor, look! There is the sea shore ahead of us."

"So it is, and the fellow in the sledge is heading for it, too."

"Do you see that ship standing there amid the ice?"

"Can it be the Golden Harpoon?"

"Very likely. The dogs are going toward it."



Grouping themselves in front of the boat, with rifles in their hands, their scant, tattered clothes fluttering in the wind, and a look of intense curiosity upon their faces, the strangers stood gaping at Frank.

nose, Pomp uttered a bellow and galloped away around the deck-house, followed by Barney, who pelted him at every step until he sought refuge inside.

Once safely out of Barney's reach, Pomp changed his clothes.

Left to himself, the Irishman went up on top of the cabin and sat down to view the dog sledge they were pursuing, while he grumbled and growled away to himself at what the coon had done.

The roof was covered with ice and so was Barney's clothes.

He couldn't get to his locker as long as Pomp had the cabin shut, he knew very well, to change his wet clothing, so he waited for Pomp to come out.

While he sat there ruminating over the matter, his clothing began to freeze fast to the icy roof upon which he was seated, and Pomp, having changed his clothing, came out and saw him.

"Hey! Come down heah!" he yelled. "I'se gwine ter lick yer now, chile."

"It's a ruction yez want, hey? Bedad, I'll accommodate yer so—"

effort to tear himself free, until at last he ripped the seat out of his pants and toppled her.

Down on the deck he went; he landed on his feet, and taking a header overboard, he landed on the ice, bruised, mad and revengeful.

"Shtop ther boat!" he yelled, scrambling to his feet and pursuing it. "Be heavens, will some wan kill that nagur for me! Shtop it, I say!"

Away rushed the Snow Bird down a hill, and Pomp took up a position astern and howled derisively at Barney.

He ran after the receding ice boat as fast as he could tear along, the grinning coon yelling encouragingly to him, and so exasperating the half-winded Irishman that he began to swear.

Pomp had turned the tables on Barney with a vengeance.

Several miles were thus passed over, the boat steadily gaining on Barney, who slipped, fell, arose, and kept on with dogged perseverance, for he feared to be left behind and get lost.

Ignorant of what was transpiring at the stern of the boat, Frank and the doctor stood in the pilot-house, keeping an even distance in pur-

"Then we may find a compass on board of her."

"I sincerely hope so, for if we do it will be our salvation."

"We can follow the shore-ice, anyway, can't we?"

"Certainly; that is the only means we have of going southward."

"Look out, Frank, the wind is changing and will jibe the sails."

Frank brought the boat up into the wind, and the jib and foresail swung in amidships, and began to lash to and fro, when the sheet-line of the foresail caught on the belaying-pin.

"Barney!" shouted Frank. "Loosen that line."

He got no answer, and held the boat up in the wind's eye.

"Pomp!" cried Frank. "Where are you?"

Still no answer was vouchsafed.

"Where are they?" muttered the doctor.

There was no time to lose, so he ran out on deck, and unfastening the line, he let the boom swing off.

He then glanced around, and saw Pomp scamper into the after door-way of the deck-house, and observed the distant Irishman run-

ning for the boat helter skelter, at the top of his speed and rapidly coming up with it.

"My gracious, what has been the matter?" gasped the doctor in amazement. "Could Barney have fallen overboard?"

"Doctor, is the sheet-line all right?" shouted Frank.

"Yes: but wait. Hold her up in the wind a few minutes. Barney is overboard, and is coming up with us fast."

Soon the Irishman reached the boat and clambered onboard.

"Where's that bottle-nosed nagur?" he roared, glaring around.

"Pomp? Has he been up to any mischief again?"

"Begorra, I've froze all ther fat off av me legs on account av him."

"Who done started de row?" gasped Pomp, poking his head out the door.

"I did!" shouted Barney angrily as he aimed a punch at the coon.

"Den I pay myself off!" said Pomp, ducking his head, and butting him down.

"Tare an' ages, d'yer moind the assassin, docthor?" panted Barney.

"Come, come! Quit your fooling," testily replied Vaneyke. "Shake hands."

"I will," said Barney, arising with a scowl, as he extended his right hand.

"An' I'se satisfied," said Pomp, grasping it firmly.

"But I'll tip him ther Devil's Tattoo forst," said Barney, kicking Pomp's shins.

"Wow!" roared the coon, with a convulsive jump and a sudden tightening of his grip on Barney's hand, that almost crushed Barney's fingers.

"Milla murder, lave go av me fisht!" yelled the Irishman, dancing up and down with Pomp, who clung to him with convulsive tenacity.

They both kept hopping up and down, and the doctor was unable to refrain from bursting into a roar of laughter at the comical appearance they cut, and then walked away and left them.

The sledge had gained a start of the ice-boat on account of its pausing and reached the wrecked ship, where they saw it disappear.

Frank sent the boat down the hill after it, and within a short time came up to the Golden Harpoon, which proved to be a large vessel, with a hole stove in the port bow.

She laid up on the ice, heeled far over, her masts and rigging gone, and her hull covered with a coating of ice.

"The man and his dogs must have gone in through that hole in the bow," said Frank. "I'll alight, go in, and pacify him."

"Look out he don't mistake your friendly intention," warned the doctor, "and play some scurvy trick upon you."

"I don't believe there is any danger to be feared, after I saved his life from the sea lion," laughed Frank. "At any rate I am armed with a rifle, pistol, and hunting knife, so I am amply prepared."

He left the boat as he spoke, filled with anxiety, for if there was a compass on the ship they would have a means of guiding themselves homeward again from that bleak, desolate place.

Approaching the gaping hole in the bow of the boat, he boldly entered in a stooping posture, and found himself in the dark hold.

But no sooner was he well within the gloomy place, when he heard the muffled tones of the man, and a moment afterwards the whole pack of dogs sprang upon him, and knocked him down.

With a ferocity that was overwhelming, the beasts, faithful to their master, began to tear at Frank's clothing, and manifest every intention of tearing him to pieces.

Assailed by fully a dozen of the ferocious brutes, and lying prostrate, although Frank made every effort to beat them off, he soon found himself inadequate to resisting their unseen assaults.

A despairing cry pealed from his lips when he found how helpless he was in that stygian gloom to cope with the beasts, and panting and exhausted he resigned himself to his awful fate.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT.

THE moment Frank gave utterance to that cry of distress, a light flashed in through the aperture in the bow of the Golden Harpoon.

It was a blinding glare, coming in a steady, bewildering streak, and caused the savage Esquimaux dogs to leap away from the fallen inventor with snarls of intense fear.

Frank scrambled hastily to his feet.

He recognized the electric glare at once as the search light which the doctor had turned on from the Snow Bird to illuminate the interior of the wreck so Frank could see.

Standing in its broad glare like a statue, the inventor raised his rifle and began to fire at the dogs which had attacked him.

Every time his rifle pealed out one of the brutes fell dead.

He heard the man whom they had been pursuing run to the after part of the hold, and call the remainder of the dogs, but they refused to obey, as their animosity was aroused against Frank.

Their stubborn temerity cost their lives, for as they continued to circle around the inventor, barking, snarling and snapping at him, he kept firing at them until the last one fell dead.

Then Frank started on a search for the man. He had retreated toward the stern, and was enveloped in the gloom, but Frank withdrew the little electric bull's-eye lantern, which he had used in the cave of ice where he had been imprisoned with Doctor Vaneyke.

Flashing the rays of the lantern around he saw the man going up a ladder at one of the after hatchways toward the deck.

By that time Barney had left the ice boat, and come into the hull of the ship to see what occasioned Frank's firing.

"I say!" shouted the Irishman. "Is it hurted yez are, sor?"

"The dogs came near tearing me to pieces," replied Frank, as he glanced down at his tattered clothing. "But the light drove them off."

"What's became av ther hathen gossoon?"

"There he goes up that ladder now to the deck."

"Come back here, ye blackguard!" Barney yelled at the man.

The strange fellow did not reply, but continued on upward, until he got between decks, and Frank and Barney ran after him.

As they went up the ladder, they heard the man going on toward the deck, and when they got there, they saw him crouching behind one of the masts, and drawing back his harpoon, as if to hurl it at them.

"Look out!" cried Frank. "He is desperate at being cornered, and means mischief. If that harpoon hits you, down you'll go!"

"Bejabbers I'll put a ball in him if he foires. Shure it's the ongrateful baste he is entiorely ter thry kill ther wans as saved his life!"

The man shouted something to them which they did not understand, but the threatening tones of his voice told them plainly that he meant to injure them if they approached too near him.

Barney aimed his rifle at the man. "Throw up yer hands, or it's a coorse yez are!" he cried.

The words had scarcely left his lips, when with a whiz the harpoon left the stranger's hands, and came flying toward Barney with deadly precision.

"Whoop!" yelled the Irishman, then he sprang aside.

It was lucky for him that he acted so promptly, else the weapon would have pierced him through and through.

As it was the sharpstone point of the spear flew so close to his body that it scraped his clothes before it went on and struck the bulwarks with a thud.

It was buried in the woodwork and stuck there shaking.

Frank dashed in at the man and seeing that he was not armed, he dropped his rifle and grappled him.

Out from behind the strips of the broken mast he dragged the man, and a fierce struggle ensued on the slippery, slanting deck.

"Shall I lend yer ther loan av me arrums?" shouted Barney, running over to the struggling pair.

"No, I can manage him alone," replied Frank, trying to throw the wiry little fellow over. "Look out of the way."

Barney drew back and followed them about, bent half over watching every move, with his hands on his knees.

Frank and his opponent struggled back and forth, the stranger fighting with great prowess, and evidently actuated by the fear that some personal harm was intended to him.

Suddenly he made a snatch for the knife in Frank's belt, pulled it out, and aimed a lunge at the inventor's heart with it before our hero divined his intention.

The point of the keen blade had fairly penetrated the jacket over Frank's heart, and be-

gan to puncture his skin before he recoiled and escaped a fatal cut.

"You are becoming murderous!" panted the inventor. "Give me that knife, you rascal, or I'll break your arm!"

He caught the man by the wrist and bent his arm up.

The grip was like a vise. It made the man groan with pain.

He held on the knife pluckily, but he could not stand the awful strain brought to bear upon his muscles.

Slowly but gradually his hold on the knife began to relax.

A look of agony settled over his dusky face, his arm-joints cracked, and terrible pains shot through his body.

The suspense only lasted a minute. Then the knife fell to the deck with a metallic ring, and Barney snatched it up with the remark:

"It's meself will kape charge av this toad-schticker!"

The fur boots worn by the combatants prevented them from slipping on the icy deck, and Frank kept the same pressure bearing upon the man's arm, bending him over backwards steadily until his panting and groaning turned into a shriek of pain.

Then he fell prone upon the deck, Frank on top of him.

"Give me a piece of rope!" panted Frank.

"Here you are," was Barney's reply before he fairly finished speaking.

"Aid me binding him."

"Faith I'll pound ther kidneys out av him, if ye gives ther worrud."

Between the two they managed to secure the struggling man and lowered him down to the ground with a rope, to the doctor who had descended from the ice boat.

"See if you can find out what nationality he is," said Frank.

"He looks very much like a white man," replied the doctor.

Questioning the stranger in a dozen different languages and dialects, he failed in every instance to get a reply.

The man then spoke to the doctor, but a puzzled look swept over Vaneyke's face, and he remarked disappointedly:

"I can understand most all the current languages in the world, but I'll be hanged if I can comprehend the tongue spoken by this queer individual."

"What do you take him to be?" asked Frank, curiously.

"It is hard to define by his language, for it seems to be a certain dialect of some northern tongue. His features are somewhat like those of the Icelanders though."

"No use can be made of him at present, but we may find a means of utilizing him later on, so we had better keep him on the boat," said Frank.

"Take him into the kitchen, and Barney and I will search the wreck to try and find a compass."

The doctor and Pomp carried the man on board of the boat, and Frank turned around, and took a survey of the wreck.

All the skylights, hatchway covers, deck houses, masts and rigging were gone, and everything was coated with ice.

Deadlights, doors and windows were smashed, and the bulwarks were broken, a hole was stoven through the deck amidships and the wheel and all the metal work was gone.

"It looks to me as if the Esquimaux had been here," said Frank to his companion. "You know how they prize all kinds of metal. Just see how the iron and brass have been ripped away. Not one of the boats remains and even the davits have been torn out of the deck."

"In that case, shure it's ther schmall chance we has fer findin' ther loikes av a compass," gloomily answered Barney. "There's ther cabin dure open. Let's go in."

They crossed the deck to the after part of the ship and went into the captain's cabin.

Upon the floor laid the bodies of several men.

They were the officers of the ship as was plainly seen by their uniforms, and they were all shot dead.

"Horrible!" ejaculated Frank, with a violent shudder; "this is proof enough of the guilt of the Lascars, Danes and Swedes, with whom we had the fight. They killed these poor fellows without the least doubt. There are no signs of resistance, no confusion, and none of the men look as if they had been armed, so they must have been assassinated—shot down in cold blood, before they could defend themselves."

"Then, begor, it wuz a just retribution thim

spalpeens met wid, whin we left 'em to their fate on the oice."

"We should have hung them."

They searched the cabin through but found no signs of a compass, and then ransacked the rest of the vessel.

It was a hopeless task, for there was not a single loose article in the form of metal to be found.

That proved conclusively that some Esquimaux had been there.

"It is of no use looking any further," said Frank at last, "for the Esquimaux haven't left so much as a tin tomato-can on board in their greed. All we can do now is to follow the shore line, and trust to luck to get out of the latitude."

"Och, but where are we at all at all on the coast? Shure we may be close ther north pole, an' we may be near ther south av this on-mannerly land av crimson schnow."

"It is utterly impossible to locate ourselves, save to go by the last entry made in the log-book of the Golden Harpoon made over a month ago. She was then in Smith's Sound."

Frank appropriated the book.

They then returned to the Snow Bird with their ill news.

A consultation was then held, and a course was planned after which they examined the boxes and barrels taken from the cairn, and found that they contained canned meats and vegetables in a good state of preservation.

The food had been left there by an American exploring party nearly a year previously as the names and dates on the packages clearly indicated, besides the flag they found.

A few hours later they were ready for the start.

"Now, boys, hoist away the jib and mainsail," said Frank, "and we'll go for the shore ice off yonder."

Barney and Pomp went out on deck to carry out this order, and as soon as the white duck fluttered aloft, the glittering runners went flying over the ice toward the distant water.

The floes along shore were five miles wide, and they saw the summer ice floating down numerous leads to the southward, the enormous glaciers throwing off icebergs, and the cracking floes sending drift ice afloat in huge cakes.

"We are right in the midst of the great iceberg factory, that supplies the oceans of the world," said the doctor.

"How do you account for the crimson color of the snow in this region, professor?" asked Frank.

"It is supposed to be colored so by a creeping lichen that grows on the ground underneath," replied the doctor. "Up in the Alps this same singular effect may be seen. The plant colors the snow and ice to a depth of twelve feet."

There was a clear field for the boat many leagues in extent, and upon seeing that no trouble was to be apprehended, Frank ordered up the foresail and topsails, and, finding that the boat could carry more head canvas to balance what was up over her, an extra stay sail went aloft forward.

Under the impetus thus given her, the Snow Bird forged ahead with amazing velocity, and left mile after mile behind.

By keeping the northern sun, which had a small orbit up in that latitude, directly astern, Frank knew he was going southward.

All that day the boat sped along without accident, and when the hours of night came on, they arrived at a large island near the shore, entirely devoid of ice and snow and covered with stunted vegetation.

"Here is where we stop," said Frank. "Do you see that ship?"

"Why, it is a full-rigged vessel at anchor off shore in a lead," said the doctor.

"The crew must be on the island. See the smoke among the trees!"

"Thank God! there's a means of getting back to civilization."

The boat ran up to the island, sails were lowered, anchors were hove, and leaving the two Frenchmen in charge of the boat, the four friends ran up the hill in among the trees, where they saw some men.

They were sailors, and all were eagerly working with picks, spades and crowbars, excavating the ground.

Our friends paused, watched unseen and listened to their conversation.

"This beats seal-hunting, messmates," cried one of the men, who looked like the captain of the crew. "How lucky we landed here and discovered that the isle was full of gold ore!"

Work, lads, work, and we will all go home rich men."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ISLE OF GOLD.

FRANK and his friends were very much astonished at what they heard, for up to that moment they could not imagine what the men were working at so assiduously.

They had often heard of gold having been found in Greenland, indeed, as early as in the year of 1575, Sir Martin Frobisher had brought back to England a piece of quartz containing the precious ore, which one of his seamen had picked up on the shore.

"These men are evidently Americans," whispered Frank to his friends. "They must have landed here during their fishing expedition, discovered that there is gold ore on the island, and are mining for it."

"Let us make our presence known to them," suggested the doctor.

"All right. Here comes the captain this way. Follow me."

Frank saw the big man who had spoken before saunter over toward the bushes behind which they were crouching.

He stepped out before the officer, followed by his friends.

"How are you, stranger?" exclaimed Frank, in cordial tones.

The startled man gave a violent start and recoiled, uttering an exclamation of amazement upon beholding the strangers.

"Lord save us!" he cried. "Here's some white men!"

"Waifs, sir; lost in this crimson land," said Frank.

"Jewittaker! I didn't see your ship coming."

"No. We didn't come by way of the water."

"Are you castaways from a wreck?"

"We came in an ice boat from the interior."

"Whereabouts is it?"

"Anchored down there on the shore ice."

"Where are you bound for?"

"Back to civilization, if we can get there."

"Then you'd better keep right on, as you ain't wanted here."

"That's rather an impolite suggestion, sir," said Frank.

"We can't stand on ceremony here, as no strangers are welcome."

"Why not? Hospitality, generosity, and friendship are the first laws of this bleak, cheerless region, especially between fellow-countrymen."

"Under some circumstances, perhaps," curtly replied the man with a lowering frown, and a suspicious glance at Frank.

"I don't see why you can't be so," said the inventor, in injured tones.

"Then you must be blind. Haven't you seen what we are doing?"

"Yes, your men are digging for gold."

"Quite correct you are. Now, this is our claim, and nobody else's."

"Oh, you are afraid we may want to share your good fortune?"

"Precisely so, and we do not intend to let anyone else into it."

"Dissuade yourself of all such fears; we want none of your gold."

"So you say now; you might change your mind later on."

"Oh, no. In civilization I am a wealthy man, and so are my friends."

"The more money a man has the more he wants," suggested the officer.

"Some men may be that way—we ain't," emphatically said Frank.

"Well my men wouldn't care to trust you, so you'd better go."

"Very well. But will you give us a compass?"

"No. We have only got the one in our bin-nacle."

"Oh, pshaw! Don't be so disagreeable! You must have a pocket compass."

"I haven't. Some of my men may. But I don't think they'll give it to you. In fact, I advise you not to let them see you."

"Why? Would they try to do us any harm?"

"They might kill you, in order to prevent you betraying their secret."

"What secret, the location of this isle of gold?"

"Yes, for we intend to return here for more, when we land the cargo we are storing on board our ship now, to get more of it; and if anyone besides ourselves knows about this isle, they may come here during our absence and get away with the ore which we all consider belongs to us, by right of discovery."

"Oh, I see. You want to protect your discovery. Well, since you won't help us any other way, won't you give us our bearings, so that we may know how to steer, to get away from here."

"Oh, no. I'm sorry to refuse you, stranger. But such a piece of information would give you the exact location of this isle. You would know just where to find it, if you ever get back to civilization and wanted to return to carry off some of our treasure."

Frank was in despair.

It was utterly impossible to get help from these men he saw.

Instead of pitying their forlorn situation, this man seemed rather to be delighted at their being lost, their ignorance of their location, and looked as if nothing would please him better than their death.

Still, in view of the fact that he had a secret worth millions of dollars to guard, Frank could scarcely blame him.

"I will go," he exclaimed bitterly. "You need have no fear of us ever attempting to interfere with you. You are wise in being careful. In fact I might do the same were our positions reversed. If your men are so zealous of their discovery and would be so dangerous to us, we have much to thank you for in acting as manly as you could just now, instead of precipitating a fight between us that would only result in the loss of life. There is my hand, stranger."

"You are a good fellow I can plainly see," remarked the officer, refusing to shake Frank's hand, "and were I personally concerned in the matter I would gladly assist you by every means in my power. My crew are ignorant, thoughtless and inconsiderate men, who can only selfishly plan benefits to themselves, so I can't answer for them."

"That's so. But why do you refuse to shake hands with me?"

"Because if you are discovered by my men I must crush all friendly feeling I now have for you, and lead them on in an effort to murder you. Let us be friends at heart, if not by outward show. Depart in peace ere it is too late."

"Well, you are not a hypocrite!" exclaimed Frank, in open admiration. "I like your principle. Good day to you, sir."

He bowed to the officer, and gestured to his friends to go, when the bushes near by parted, and half a dozen sailors appeared with guns in their hands, which they pointed at Frank and his friends.

"Hands up, strangers!" harshly exclaimed one of the men.

"You are discovered!" cried the officer, starting back in blank dismay.

"On guard, boys!" calmly said Frank, turning to his three companions who immediately raised their rifles to their shoulders.

"We've heerd all as yers said!" proceeded the sailor.

"You had better let them go in peace, boys," pleaded the officer.

"Oh, don't tret about us," coolly interposed Frank, toying restlessly with his rifle, and fixing a contemptuous glance upon the treasure hunters.

"Wot!" ejaculated the sailor. "Le 'em go, arter wot they knows?"

"They appear to be brave, honest men, and are already rich in the bargain."

"All we ask of you," said Frank bluntly, "is a compass, so that we can find a way to a place of safety, as we are lost."

"We don't keer nothin' about them, an' thar troubles," growled the sailor. "We don't trust no man, we don't, an' wot's ourn, is our own. If once they gits away, it's all up with our ever gittin' another ounce o' gold outter this place, 'cause they'll return durin' our absence, an' strip this place well. Oh, no! We ain't agoin' ter 'low that, we ain't!"

"I tell you, I will answer for them!" said the officer.

The scowling sailor walked up to him, deliberately, and stood glaring into his eyes with a cruel, savage look.

"Say!" he cried hoarsely. "An' your agoin' back on us?"

"No! I will stick to you. But don't be so insolent! Remember, I am your superior officer. I command your respect, sir!"

"Spect be blowed!"

"What! How dare you?"

"Here's how much we fears yer now!"

The sailor struck the officer a savage blow on the head with his rifle, and with a groan of pain, the man fell senseless.

"Coward!" indignantly cried Frank. "That man was unprepared for you."

"If he wuz, I wouldn't a got ther best on him," chuckled the man.

"Now you hold up your hands!" said Frank, in deep disgust, "and if you don't do it within one minute, I'll blow your brains out."

He covered the man with his weapon as he spoke, and the fellow started back, with a look of fear, and yelled:

"Give it to 'em, boys!"

This command was a signal to Frank and his friends, and they fired at the gold-seekers ere they could fairly touch the triggers of their weapons.

Four of the men fell to the ground wounded,

"Botheration!" disappointedly said Barney, his face elongating. "It's chatin' me, yez are, out av breakin' a dozen heads, bedad!"

Pomp gave a grunt of disgust, lowered his weapon, and the four retreated down the hill to the ice.

They were followed by the crew of the ship, who were mostly all armed with pistols, besides their spades, bars, and picks, and some few with rifles.

The sailors fired after them.

Some of the singing bullets whizzed so uncomfortably close to our friends that they felt sorely inclined to return the shots.

Shower after shower of bullets struck him harmlessly, but he paid no attention to them, and went on loosening the anchors.

He had instructed his friends to protect their heads and bodies in the same way, and when the anchors were up they came on deck again, and were made targets.

Great was the amazement of the sailors to see the balls strike the four men without doing them the least harm.

"Loosen away with the jib and mainsail halliards," cried Frank, as soon as the anchors were stowed on the deck. "We must get under sail at once. The ship in the lead is on the oth-



The ice gave away from beneath his feet, and went down in the gulf with a loud crash. Locked in his enemy's deathly embrace, Frank fell over with the ice, and the next instant the struggling pair vanished from the sight of the horrified spectators.

and the other two ran away toward the rest of the crew, who, having been alarmed by the voices of our friends and the shots, came rushing forward.

There were over twenty men, including officers, as the crew of the whaler was a large one, owing to the size of the ship.

Several shots from the first six to attack Frank and his friends, had gone flying about the ice boat's crew, but so wildly were the weapons aimed that none of them were hit.

"They are all armed!" exclaimed Frank, in troubled tones.

"We can't cope with such numbers!" cried Dr. Vaneyke.

"Faith, it's a roarin' shindy we'll be afther havin'!" delightedly yelled Barney, his eyes and face all aglow with excitement.

"Doan yo' run," howled Pomp, aiming his deadly rifle at the oncoming sailors. "Dar an fodder fo' de grabe yard acomin'!"

"It isn't wise to stay and fight," said Frank. "We have no object in killing them, or risking our lives. Retreat!"

"A sensible plan," acquiesced the doctor, complying.

"Don't fire back," said Frank, warningly. "It will only enrage them worse. Matters are bad enough now."

"Have you got any plan in view?" queried Vaneyke.

"Yes, and a good one, too."

"Let's hear it."

"First, to escape them."

"Yes, and then?"

"Steal on board of their ship and rob them of a compass."

"Splendid. Ah! there is the boat now. All aboard."

Fortunately the boat was close by and none of the flying bullets struck them, and they hastened to get on board of her.

Once inside of the Snow Bird they were safe, for they soon had the bullet proof shutters down over the windows, and when the crew in pursuit paused near the ice boat and began to bang at it with their weapons the leaden messengers of death flattened harmlessly against the metal hull.

The anchors yet held the boat fast, but Frank put on his suit of fur mail, went out, and began to loosen them.

er side of the island, and we have lured them all away from it. We can get to her half an hour before they can, ransack her from stem to stern and get away with a compass before they can come up."

Barney grasped the throat halliard and Pomp the peak of the mainsail, upon which they began to lustily hoist away, while Frank and the doctor ran up forward and began to hoist away on the big jib.

Out swung the boom, and away filled the stay-sail when they were sheeted home, while Frank ran into the pilot-house to steer the vessel, and the sailors made a rush in a compact mass to get up on the deck of the ice-boat.

"Stop them!" roared the first officer of the ship. "They'll get away and betray our secret if you don't."

"Stand by to repel boarders!" cried Frank, as he turned the wheel and sent the boat flying off on the starboard tack.

Barney, Pomp and the doctor attacked the men who were trying to get on board with boat-hooks and belaying pins, and after a short, sharp tussel, drove them off on the ice again.

Then away flashed the boat, skirting the island.

"Back for the ship!" yelled the mate, seeing which way the ice-boat was going. "There's only two men aboard of her, and they are going that way. They may set her afire out of spite."

With a yell the men rushed up on the island again to cross it, and the ice-boat went along the margin of the land.

"Up with the foresail! Up topsails and gibs staysails!" cried Frank, his eyes flashing with excitement. "We must beat them in this race, boys, or we may not even get away from this frozen land!"

Up rolled the mountain of white canvas over the ice-boat, and it rushed along with the speed of the wind—to win or to lose?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE FIGHT FOR THE BINNACLE.

"THERE'S the sealer! See, it's named the Red Fox! Lower away those topsails! Barney, let go the fore-stay sails! Pomp, loosen the fore and mainsail halliards from the cleats. Quick, boys, on your lives, for the crew will soon be across the island to prevent us getting on board of their ship, as they fear we may fire it!"

The clarion voice of Frank peeled out sharply on the crisp cold air, as he sent the boat flying toward the big sealing ship lying anchored in the "lead," south of the isle of gold.

The negro and the Irishman dashed out on deck, and Dr. Vaneyke let down the ice brakes to stop the flying boat.

There were only two men on watch upon the Red Fox and Frank did not expect to have much trouble with them in boarding the ship in search for a compass.

Both of them were leaning over the bulwarks on the leeward side intently watching the Snow Bird as it came rushing over toward the vessel, their curiosity greatly aroused.

Down fluttered the billowy mountain of canvas to the deck of the ice boat, and St. Malo and Beauvais of Brest ran out and helped the negro and Irishman to tie it down in stops so that the wind would not tear it to shreds.

The hours of night had come on apace, but the midnight sun gleamed amid the cloud banks in the north, and a dense sea fog, common in those latitudes, came rolling on from the east before the wind, enveloping everything.

As soon as the boat came to a pause beside the anchored ship, Frank saw the fog and said in some alarm.

"I'm sorry this came up, boys. It will hide the approach of the crew over the island. But never mind. We must endure it. Don't tie those sails down too fast, for we may need them to escape in a few moments again."

"We are in a bad place to get caught in the fog," said the doctor, "for there are so many open leads around here that we might run into one in the mist."

"Ship ahoy!" yelled Barney, as soon as everything was in readiness, and he and Frank descended to the ice.

"Ahoj, thar, messmate!" replied the watch. "Wot queer kind o' craft d'ye call that 'ere skimm'n'-dish?"

"An ice boat," said Frank. "We want to board you."

"What fur?" growled the other man.

"We just left the diggings up on the island, and—"

"Did Cappen Bobstay send ye?"

"Of course. Several of the crew will be here presently."

"Hull on, an' I'll fling ye a rope ladder."

"All right, my friend. Doctor," added Frank, in low tones, as he turned to Vaneyke, "you and Pomp must keep a sharp lookout. Arm the two Frenchmen. If the crew gets here before we can get off that ship, there'll be hot work."

"This confounded fog shuts off the view of everything."

"Warn us of danger by a rifle shot."

"Depend upon me, Frank."

Down came a rope ladder over the side just then, and up went Frank and Barney with a run, to the deck.

They were met amidships by the two sailors on watch.

Suddenly aiming their pistols at the men, Frank and Barney cried:

"Hold up your hands!"

The two men did so, uttering cries of alarm.

"Don't shoot!" cried one.

"Quit yer foolin', messmates," said the other.

"We are in deadly earnest, though," said Frank.

"Lor! What hev we done?"

"Nothing wrong."

"Then wot be yer athreatenin' us fer?"

"So you can't down us. Go on aft, into that galley."

"Wot be yer up ter, anyway?"

"That don't concern you. Make tracks now."

The two startled and mystified men walked over to the galley with their hands held up over their heads, and entered.

Frank shut the door after them, and bolted it on the outside.

"They are disposed of. Now, Barney, to search the ship."

"Rummage ther captain's cabin, sor, an' I'll look elsewhere."

"If we don't find a loose compass, we must take the one in the binnacle. Hurry up now, old fellow."

They separated and began the search, and Frank succeeded in picking up a small brass pocket compass, but the needle swivel was broken, and it consequently showed no deflections.

He put it in his pocket, however.

Then he went on deck, and met Barney up forward.

"Any luck?" he said, eagerly.

"Plinty—bad luck."

"What's gone wrong?"

"I found no compass at all, at all."

"Then we must get the one out of the binnacle."

"Shure it's a wrinch we must be afther havin' ter git at it."

"Ain't there a tool chest down in the fore-castle?"

"There is that. I'll go down an' git a wrinch."

Barney was just about to do so, when there suddenly sounded a yell, down on the ice boat, followed by several pistol shots.

"Frank! Look out! Here are our enemies!" shouted Vaneyke.

"Barney—come—over with you!"

"Not afore I gits that compass."

"The rope ladder—I must cut it ere any one can climb up. If that means of boarding the ship is cut off, we can hold it against an army!" Barney did not wait to get a wrench, but seizing a ship's ax, he attacked the binnacle, and dealt it several heavy swinging blows at the base of the pedestal to break the iron post, so that he could carry away the brass globe at the top.

Frank dashed over to the leeward side of the ship, where the rope ladder hung, with his knife in his hand, and just as he reached the bulwarks a man's head appeared coming up.

He was the first officer of the ship.

"They're aboard!" he yelled, upon seeing the inventor.

"Down with you!" shouted Frank, brandishing his knife in the man's face. "You can't set foot on the deck of this ship!"

"Never!" shouted the man, clinging to the ladder with one hand and aiming a pistol at Frank with the other. "Die, blast you!"

He was just about to pull the trigger, when Frank cut the rope ladder, and down it went with the mate like a shot.

He struck the ice all in a heap, amid a number of his men, whom Frank saw dimly through the thick fog, firing at the men on the ice-boat, without doing them any harm.

They all had on their suits of mail yet.

"Barney!" shouted Frank, "have you got the compass yet?"

"Jist knocked ther leg from under it," replied the Irishman's voice from the fog. "I'll jine yer in wan minute, sor."

"Hurry up. We ought to get back on board the ice-boat."

"Faix, it's safe they be's there widout us, sor. D'yer hear that?"

"The bursting of hand grenades! Pomp must be firing them."

"Arrah, but that nagur's ther dacent foighter, so he is!"

"I'll prepare a rope, down which we can slide to the ice."

"Luck an' see if ther boat is in soight."

"Yes; I can see her just below here."

"Then as we can't very well carry this heavy, bulky binnacle, I'll be afther tossin' it down to ther docthor."

Barney came up to Frank, clasping the heavy brass ball in his arms, and rested it upon the bulwarks.

"Doctor!" shouted Frank in Esquimaux so the men would not understand what he was saying.

"Stand ready to catch this binnacle."

"All right, Frank. I'll drop a mattress on the ice so it won't break."

He went inside, and the sailors down upon the ice began to fire shot after shot up at the two men on the deck of the Red Fox, but none of the bullets penetrated their helmets or clothes.

A moment afterwards the doctor flung a mattress upon the ice beside the boat, and Barney let the binnacle drop down on it.

The lamp glasses and the observing-aperture glass were broken into a thousand fragments, while the top of the brass cap was battered and dented, but the compass was not injured by the fall.

It bounded from the mattress to the ice.

As soon as the sailors saw what was being done, they made a rush to recover it, just as the doctor sprang down upon the ice with a rifle in his hand to secure the coveted prize.

"They're stealin' our compass!" yelled the mate. "We can't ever get away from here without it. Don't let them doom us ter ther worst sort o' fate, boys. Fight 'em like demons!"

The doctor's rifle pealed out spitefully, but did not check them, and Pomp ran over to that side of the boat with his grenades.

Frank and Barney up on the deck were held in painful suspense as they watched the struggle going on for possession of the binnacle.

Pomp aimed a grenade at the sailors and fired it.

With a loud explosion it struck the ice, and ripped it all up.

Pieces of the flying iron hit the binnacle, and tore it to fragments.

The compass was utterly destroyed.

A cry of consternation pealed from all of our friends upon witnessing the ruination of all their hopes for salvation.

Frank and Barney staggered back.

"That's the end of all hope!" exclaimed Frank, despairingly.

"Och, mush, but that nagur is ther lunkhead entoi'rely," groaned Barney.

"Look out! Some of the sailors are coming up the forechains over the bow."

"Then it's down ther rope we'll be afther schloidin'."

Frank let the rope go over the side at a spot where none of his enemies were to be seen, and they both slid down to the ice on it.

So dense was the fog that it was with difficulty they could see three yards in advance of where they were.

Frank had the boat located, however, and they made a dash for it, when they went right into the midst of a crowd of their enemies, when a terrific struggle began for an instant.

Picks, crowbars and spades were wielded against the two, and many a painful blow struck them, but they fought with coolness and agility, forced their way through the crowd and ran on for the boat, upon the deck of which the doctor had returned with the mattress, beside the chagrined Pomp.

The moment Frank and Barney were upon the ice boat, the former went into the pilot-house, with the remark:

"We may as well go. If we remain here, it will only lead to a perfectly useless fight. The compass is smashed to pieces, and we have no call to remain here any longer."

"Give me wan minute av divarsion among thim spalpeens wid me schtick," implored Barney, pathetically. "Faith, I only want to welt a few holes in this fog over their heads."

"Hoist the gib and mainsail!" exclaimed Frank.

"Dey am a-closin' in on all sides ob de boat now!" shouted Pomp, excitedly. "Scattah aroun' de decks dar, an' keep dem off!"

"Use the grenades," called Frank, "but look out that you do not strike the boat with them. I'll start her ahead."

The two Frenchmen joined Barney, Pomp and the doctor, and dispersing all about the decks, they fought off the crew of the Red Fox, who were now making desperate efforts on all sides to get up on board of the ice-boat.

Frank turned on the electric current and lowered the wheels when they spun around, the spikes dug in the ice, and the boat forged ahead.

Out on deck the rest were having a fierce struggle with those who had gained a footing on the boat, while those who had been beaten off or had not yet made an effort to board her, were soon left far behind when the boat went on.

Nearly a dozen of the men were on the ice-boat, but they were not equal to the five who opposed them.

One by one they were knocked overboard, until the last was gone, and our friends held undisputed possession of the boat.

"They are gone," said the doctor, entering the pilot house.

"Don't let them put up the canvas—we must feel our way along in this dense fog, doctor," said Frank.

Vaneyke went out on deck and gave Frank's order.

The inventor had to slacken speed, now that their enemies were disposed of, and the boat crept away in the mist like some grim, shadowy monster.

But the wind, which had been strongly blowing without dissipating the fog, kept increasing, driving the banks of fog along in heavy clouds.

It gave the boat an extra momentum that was not noticed until there suddenly sounded a violent shock in the ice under the boat, and Frank stopped the driving wheels.

But the boat rushed on at a high rate of speed propelled by the wind, and before Frank could put the brakes on, it rushed into an open lead and plunged into the sea, amid a mass of floating ice blocks upon which were a swarm of seals.

CHAPTER XXXV.

LOST IN THE FOG.

"We can't get out of the water, boys. The runner-posts are in the way, for the shores are steep and the ice is cracked all along the edges."

"The boat goes along just as well in the water, Frank."

"Yes, but the gale is tossing the ice cakes pretty hard, and every one that strikes the boat may sink us."

"Faith, then it's better ter anchor than folly ther lead," said Barney.

"We would be less exposed to the shocks of the ice if we were tied up to the shore," admitted Frank. "I'll steer the boat over to the left hand side, and you can go ashore with an anchor, Barney. Stand by now to fend her off with poles."

"Done wanten put out a bow an' stern line," said Pomp.

"Then you go with Barney to help him," said Frank.

The two men went out, and taking down the ice-poles they each went out on the port runner arms and stood there, ready to fend off the boat if it threatened to bump too hard against the shore.

The wind was driving the boat rapidly along, and Frank had to exercise the utmost caution, for they were apt to strike the shore before they expected to in the fog.

Barney was the first to see the ice.

"Be aisy!" he shouted to Frank, "we're close in, sor."

"Do you see the shore?" called Frank hastily.

"Faith, it's only tin feet away."

"All right. Now, Pomp, keep your eyes peeled astern there."

"Yaas, sir," cheerily responded the coon. A moment later he gave a yell and thrust out his pole.

The iron point on the end stuck in the ice, and he held the boat stationary by main force of strength.

Barney caught the ice at the bow a moment later and hauled it over until the runner-arm was close to the shore.

"Joomp ashore wid ye an' grab this rope, Pomp," he shouted.

The negro did so, and Barney flung him a line as the wind was in the act of blowing the boat out in the stream again.

Pomp held the bow of the boat to the ice by main force of muscle, and his feet began to slip when he yelled for Barney.

"C'm out yere on de bow-sprit!" he shouted. "I ain't no Samsom!"

"Howld on, ye barrier!" shouted Barney as he ran in to the deck with the ice anchor in his hand. "I'll be wid yez in wan minute, ter lend yer ther loan of me muckle!"

He went out on the long bow-sprit which now overhung the ice, and nearly fell several times, as it was coated with ice.

But he dropped down beside his old friend after a few moments and planted the anchor at the full length of its line.

The boat then held fast.

A second anchor was then taken out.

"Faith it's George Washin'ton an' all av his army couldn't move it now," said the Irishman. "Let ther wind blow schtrong enough

ter freeze ther whiskers av a brass monkey, an' bedad it can't move it aither."

"How is she now?" asked Frank as they stepped on board by means of the runner arms which were now close up against the ice. "Is the ice firm she's anchored to?"

"Spees it am as strong as de res' ob it," said Pomp.

The doctor just then came in.

"I've examined all the bearings, Frank," said he, "and I see that they will rust soon for want of lubrication."

"There isn't a drop of oil left," said the inventor.

"What is to be done then?"

"Make some, of course, out of seal oil."

"Oh! There are plenty of the creatures around here."

"Do you want to go after a few with me?"

"Nothing would please me better."

"Then take your rifle, and we'll go ashore. We can't do any more here now until this dense fog blows away, doctor."

Barney was left in care of the boat, and Frank went ashore with the doctor, and walked away along the edge of the lead.

"The ice is rotten and badly cracked," said the inventor. "Look out you don't tumble in, doctor."

"We've got to keep close to the edge, if we want to see the seals."

"True. Ah, there comes a floe with several on it."

They had gone some distance away from the boat by this time and lost sight of it in the fog bank, and now saw a large cake of ice coming down the lead, impelled by the wind, on which laid several seals of the wandering species.

They both took aim and fired.

Two seals were killed, and fell over on the floe which by this time had drifted close to the shore.

Frank reached out with his gun, and touching the ice cake he gradually dragged it over toward him.

While he was so engaged, the ice upon which he and the doctor were standing suddenly cracked, and broke from the main floe.

"Run, Frank, and jump on the shore ice!" cried the doctor.

"Ah! We have broken loose, and are afloat now, driven by the wind! This is bad, doctor."

He was startled, and let go the cake on which laid the seals.

Then he and Vaneyke ran for the back of the cake they were on, to jump from it, when to their dismay they saw that the breach was too wide to be crossed at a leap.

Moreover, the wind was fast driving them out into the middle of the lead, and hurrying them along the channel away from where the Snow Bird was anchored.

"We can't help ourselves, now, in the teeth of this gale," said Frank.

"Let's shout for help, or we may get tangled up in great trouble."

"There's nothing else for it," assented Frank.

Then they both raised their voices, and began to shout.

No reply came back, for the wind was blowing their voices away from the ice-boat, and they soon lost sight of the shore.

The channel was several hundred feet wide, and the ice drift was tossed roughly by the violent wind, cakes of it often striking against the floe they were on with such shocks that they were cast in a dread that each successive one might break their fragile foothold to pieces.

They kept on shouting for assistance at intervals, but no reply save the mournful sighing of the wind was borne to their anxious listening, and they soon gave up all hope.

Half an hour passed monotonously by.

Then a large floe, on which lay half a dozen large seals, was dashed against the one they were on, and with a loud noise the two cakes of ice were broken to pieces.

Frank and the doctor toppled into the water, their rifles strapped on their backs.

There was a seal near the inventor, and he caught hold of it, and the frightened creature swam swiftly away.

It slipped away from Frank presently, but he caught hold of its hind flipper and was dragged after it again.

Within a moment Frank and the doctor were separated from each other's sight, and the seal carried the inventor straight to the shore, which he lost no time in seizing.

Then he pulled himself upon it, and the seal dove under the ice, glad to make its escape with its life.

Standing upon the shore, Frank eagerly

scanned the water, but the fog hung heavily there, obscuring the entire range of vision.

"Doctor! doctor!" he shouted.

No reply was returned.

"Vaneyke!" he cried, again and again.

Still no reply came, and Frank ran along the edge of the ice, repeatedly calling, without the least result.

"I'll return to the ice-boat, and drive her down the lead after him!" he muttered.

"Strange he didn't answer. That's about the only way in which I can hope to find him again."

With this resolution Frank ran along the edge of the lead again, back in the direction in which he had left the ice-boat.

He felt pretty sure that the doctor had managed to support himself upon an ice floe, and that he would soon find him.

On, on, he ran as fleetly as a deer.

Presently he arrived at one of the ice anchors, which Barney had planted to hold the boat against the shore.

But the Snow Bird was gone!

A frayed piece of rope was attached to the anchor looking as if the line had broken under a severe strain.

Frank paused, and a cold chill passed through him.

"Gone!" he gasped, in blank consternation.

"But where?"

There was no means of finding out except by attracting attention.

He ran along the ice and shouted loudly.

Fully a mile back the way they came went Frank without getting a reply, and then he retraced his steps two miles with no better result, and at last came to a pause in utter dismay.

"Where can the boat be? What will become of the doctor?" he thought bitterly. "I am lost in this fog, for I don't know which way to turn. Oh, what shall I do?"

Restless and anxious, he kept moving about, hoping and praying for the thick veil of mist to lift, but it obstinately remained hour after hour, until at last, overcome by weariness and exhaustion, Frank sank down on the ice.

Soon a drowsy feeling overcame him.

He slept.

All alone in that vast field of ice, and enveloped in the pall of the frosty fog, he was utterly lost as if in the Sahara desert.

A few minutes after Frank and the doctor left the ice boat Barney, who stood upon the ice, was startled to see a number of shadowy figures approaching.

"Bedad it's thim schpalpeens from the Red Fox!" he cried. "Shure they've follied us clane from where we left 'em be doggin' our thracks, an' it's death ter ther oice boat they'll be if wanst they overpower ther loikes av us."

He sprang toward one of the anchors and, lifting it up, he hastily carried it on board of the Snow Bird.

Before he could return ashore for the others, the sailors who followed them had reached the shore brandishing their weapons and loudly threatening the ice boatmen with dire punishment.

"Whoop!" yelled the Irishman to alarm his friends. "Be on ter thim! It's a raid they're a-makin on us fellies!"

He rushed into the pilot-house and started the electric current, reversed the wheels, and the boat starting back gave a violent tug at the remaining anchor cable and broke it.

The boat darted out into the channel before any of the sailors could get on board of her, and in an instant the two crews were lost to each other's views, swallowed up in the fog.

Barney grasped the wheel and started the boat ahead.

It was all done so quickly that the boat was fairly flying down the channel before the rest of the crew fairly knew what happened.

"De boat's broke loose!" exclaimed Pomp, wildly, as he ran in.

"Faith, it's looky fer us she did. Thim Red Foxes wuz forninst us ther minute ago," replied Barney, seriously. "Didn't yez see thim?"

"G'way! Yo' doan' tell me so," skeptically replied Pomp.

"Begob, it's afeered they bes as we'll escape wid our lives ter tell some wan where their isle ay goold lies, an' schtart up an opposition diggin' party ter chait them," said Barney.

"Zey are ver desperait," commented St. Malo, gravely.

"Begorry they'd be after aitin' us if we'd let 'em, Frenchy."

"Vich vay ve go now, Monsieur Irish?"
 "Shure an' I don't know, Bullfrogs."
 "Eef Monsieur Reade returns, an' find us gone, vat he do, Potatoes?"

"Wait until we comes back, Parleyvoo."
 Just then they heard the shots from the rifles of Frank and Vaneyke and knowing it was them that fired, Barney steered the boat for the direction the reports came from.

A few moments afterwards, they heard Frank calling for the doctor, and would have gone over to the shore if the professor himself had not been seen just then.

The old scientist was evidently half frozen, and so numbed and chilled that he could not cry out for help.

He was seen to be clinging to a small piece of ice, but as the boat dashed up to him, his nerveless hands let it go and he sank beneath the icy water.

"He's dhrownin'!" yelled Barney holding up the boat near the spot where Vaneyke went down. "Oh, he be kilt sure!"

"Not while dis coon kin sabe him," cried Pomp.

And with one rush he went out on deck.

The next moment he dove into the channel, and vanished under water, determined to rescue the perishing doctor.

Barney had the utmost difficulty to hold the boat near the spot where the darky had gone overboard, the gale was blowing so hard.

"Begorra," he muttered desperately, "if I lets it dhrift tin feet away from this schpot, they'll be hid be ther fog, an' then it's no know-in' if we'll ever pick them up at all at all!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE MOST NORTHERN HOUSE IN THE WORLD.

"Pomp, you are a hero! You have saved my life!"

"An' neah froze de fat offer dese yere ole bones adoin' it, dèctah."

"Have you seen any signs of Frank?"

"No, sah. Ain't yo'?"

"The last I saw of him a seal was towing him over to the shore."

"Faith," said Barney, "we heard him callin' fer yer awhile ago."

"Then he must be ashore somewhere. Run for the ice, Barney."

The doctor had nearly been drowned, and would certainly have perished if Pomp hadn't jumped overboard to save him.

Barney told him how the crew of the Red Fox had appeared again while they went after seals for lubricating oil, and explained how they had lost an anchor while escaping out into the lead.

They did not suspect that Frank was lost in the fog, had ultimately given up his search for them and lapsed into a deep slumber far away from the spot they then were at.

The Irishman steered the boat over to the shore, and after a few moments the Snow Bird came to a shelving embankment.

It was an easy matter to run her up on the ice, and once she was out of the water, Barney turned her bow to the northward.

"If some man will sit out on ther ind av ther bowsprit ter kape watch," said Barney, "we will be able ter go on an' not roon any chances av goin' back in ther wather."

"Monsieur Irish," said St. Malo, "I go on ze look out."

"Good fer you, Frinchy; it's useful yer amakin' yerself."

The balloonist left the pilot-house, went out on the long bowsprit to the extreme end and sat down astride of it.

Barney then kept the boat moving forward under a light electric current, as there was too much danger in using sails in such a dense fog as then prevailed.

In this manner several miles were covered. Presently she came to the spot where her anchor laid.

"Stop ze boat!" shouted St. Malo. "Ere ees ze anchor."

"Faith, I thought we'd find it," said Barney, shutting off power and bringing the Snow Bird to a pause. "Pomp, go an' git it."

The darky disembarked, recovered the ice grapple, and clambering aboard of the boat again, the Irishman started her off once more.

Within fifteen minutes they heard the sound of pistol shots ahead in the fog somewhere, and Barney sent the boat dashing for the spot, when up through the mist there boomed a heap of ice.

Behind it crouched a man who was firing a pistol at several shadowy figures in the gloom on the other side of the pile of ice.

St. Malo caught a glimpse of the dim figures, and saw at once that they were some of the crew of the Red Fox.

The man who was crouching behind the hillock glanced around.

"Ahoy!" he cried. "Haul to!"

"Eet eez Monsieur Reade!" shouted St. Malo. "Haul to!"

"He's found!" shouted Barney, stopping the boat.

The next moment Frank got aboard the boat, and the sailors who were menacing him disappeared suddenly.

Frank hurried into the pilot-house, and a moment later was warmly shaking hands with his friends.

"How did you get ashore, when the seal dragged you away from me?" queried Dr. Vaneyke, who by that time had entirely recovered from the evil effects of his immersion.

"It was an easy matter," laughed Frank. "You was luckier than I was. The boat picked you up, I see. For my part, I came back to the spot where I had left the boat anchored and discovered that it was gone. Vainly I searched for you and at last sank down, tired and sleepy. I had not lapsed into slumber long, when some of our enemies appeared. I awoke with a feeling of coming danger, just in time to save my life from their weapons and got behind that ice-pile where you found me."

"They saw the boat coming, and vanished," said the doctor.

"Wot's ter be did now?" asked Barney. "Shure, an' if Pomp hadn't blown that binna-cle ter pieces wid a grenade, we'd a been able ter git back ter ther south again, wid no trouble at all at all."

"This fog will clear away after awhile," said Frank, "and we can then follow the shore ice as far as possible."

St. Malo came in.

"Monsieur," said he, "shall I stay out zere on lookout any longer?"

"No," replied Frank. "Let everything be closed up on board for protection, and keep a lookout inside, out of the cold. We will stay here until the fog blows over."

He drew the little broken compass out of his pocket, which he had found on board of the sealer, and examined it closely.

"Monsieur," said St. Malo, "why you say zat you not 'ave a compass?"

"The needle swivel of this one is broken," replied Frank.

"Pairmeet me zat I see eet."

"Certainly. Here it is. Can you do anything with it?"

"Why," said the Frenchman, closely examining it, "I can mend ze swivel ver' easy, Monsieur Reade."

"What!" cried Frank, delightedly. "Make it useful again?"

"Sairtainly," asserted the balloonist.

"Then, by Jove, set to work upon it at once, and we will soon get out of the unfortunate position we are placed in."

The ingenious Frenchman went back into the kitchen to get some tools he had in a little hand satchel, when he saw the rear door open, and a man dashed out.

He was the little fat fellow whom they had pursued in a sledge from the moraine to the wrecked ship, whom they had been keeping a prisoner. His bonds laid upon the floor.

They were literally gnawed in two by the sharp teeth of the man.

"Parbleu!" shouted St. Malo, dashing after him. "Stop! Stop!"

The man paid no heed to him, but continued on, and sprang overboard.

Hearing the noise, Frank ran out on deck. "What's the matter St. Malo?" he cried.

"Oh, *sacre*, ze prisonaire deed just escaped!" "Did he? Well, let him go. I didn't want him."

"Zere 'e go now, monsieur."

"Yes, I see him. Is that all the trouble?" "Mon Dieu, eez zat not enough, sair?"

Frank laughed, and the Frenchman shrugged his shoulders, shut the door, and securing his tools, he set to work on the compass.

A watch was set, and those not on duty turned in.

Next day the fog was gone. The bright, dazzling sun shone down upon the gleaming landscape of crimson snow with an effulgence of good cheer that made the spirits of the lost men rise tremendously.

Pomp cooked a good breakfast, and when it was partaken of, the boat was started off along the shore ice, under reefed sails, and followed the lead in the ice, mile after mile.

Before the hours of night came, they were in the shadow of an enormous mountain of snow and beheld a small house nestling down in a valley below.

This residence was the most northern habitation of any white man in the entire world, and the sight of it filled our friends with the utmost amazement.

There was clear ice leading straight down to it, and Frank steered the boat in a direct line for the place.

As they went down into the valley they saw that it was a small, peaked-roofed structure, with heaps of boxes and barrels near it, and the inhabitants saw them.

Steering southeast, the Snow Bird passed around an iceberg and opened a low, rugged point of land, without any trace of vegetation.

The little white house stood upon the nude rock, a white and red emblem of Denmark fluttering from a flagstaff on the roof.

There were huts and tents scattered about the hill side in which dwelt sixty savages, over whom the white inhabitant ruled; numberless sledge dogs were seen, and a terrible stench arose from the carcasses of decomposing fish.

When the boat reached the isolated house, the proprietor, who was named Peter Jensen, came out with his wife, Betty, and his three children, Johana Maria, Jennie Caroline and Julius Christian, to meet the castaways and give them welcome.

They were accompanied by a swarthy crowd of skin-clad men, and as the sturdy-figured, sandy-haired man approached, with a curious look upon his face, Frank went outside and accosted him.

A short dialogue in Danish followed, in which Frank told his own history, and then he asked Jensen:

"How is it I find you and your family in this cheerless place?"

"My friend," replied the Dane, with a faint smile, "it is a remote place for white people to settle. We are only one thousand miles from the north pole as the crow flies. We have been afflicted with the scurvy, for health can't be preserved where snow is on the ground nine months out of the twelve, and where the sun isn't seen in winter for more than one hundred days. I have to bank my house with snow, keep my windows double-glazed, burn lamps and stoves constantly, warding off the piercing cold, which here often sinks to 50 degrees below zero, and sometimes lower. But come to my house and I will explain why we are here."

"Is my boat safe from these savages?"

"Yes, if you lock up every portable thing they can steal."

"Then I'll leave the two Frenchmen on board to guard her."

Frank and his friends then went ashore, and entered the house, where they were given a good meal of venison and cider, duck, cakes and coffee, after which Danish pipes were produced.

Then chatting away pleasantly Jensen told his story.

Having saved some money, he got married in Denmark, and was given charge of the settlement of Tessuisak, which is fifty miles north of Upernivik, and on the confines of the great ice barrier over which the ice boat had come.

Bear and fox skins, seal oil, skins, and eider down were the chief products which he disposed of to the Royal Greenland Fishing Company.

He was a great hunter, and ruled his population like a feudal lord, making the natives do all his work, yet one of them had pitched a tent near his house door whom he dared not order away for fear of offending the whole tribe, as the woman was supposed to be a witch.

"Her name was Annoraskak, meaning, 'Mother of the Winds,' and Jensen hated her most cordially, as the Esquimaux all imagined that she could by sorcery and witchcraft send forth decrees which stilled the winds or made them blow, sent good fortune to her friends, and disaster to her enemies."

To retain her friendship the simple barbarians daily sent the hag donations of food and clothing, and even the family of Jensen looked upon her with shuddering fear.

"I will get rid of her for you," said Frank, "and I'll do it so that the natives won't blame you for it either."

"Do so," eagerly said the Dane, "and the curse of my existence will be removed. She openly defies me, and is forever calling down maledictions upon my soul. That makes the

*The account of this family is true in every particular.—Author.

natives despise me more than I care for, and if I once lose my power over them, they won't do much for me in the future."

"Have no fears. I'll carry her off in my boat."

"Take her to Upernavik and put her in the hands of the missionary. I'll direct you how to get there," said Jensen.

"You shall do nothing of the kind!" hissed a sibilant voice in the window.

The speakers all started, glanced around and there, framed in the window, was the face of the ugliest old woman with disheveled gray hair that Frank had ever seen in his life.

"The witch!" gasped Jensen, turning pale. "She speaks Danish well," coolly said Frank.

"Yes, she is a Danish woman, I believe. It is said that she escaped ashore here from a ship with a criminal who was her husband. He has mysteriously disappeared."

The witch's head had vanished as soon as she had spoken.

"She will go and alarm the Esquimaux against us, won't she?" asked Frank. "She seemed to be in an ugly mood."

"Yes, that is what I fear," said Jensen, in troubled tones; "and there will now be great trouble for me."

Frank motioned to his friends and they left the house and went over to the tent of Annor-asnak to abduct her.

Pulling aside the door-flaps, they entered. The place was crowded with natives.

The witch was talking to them excitedly, and as soon as our friends appeared they started out at them.

"On guard!" cried Frank, retreating. "An attack!"

"Faix, I'll have her, anyway!" cried Barney.

And before any one could stop him he darted in the tent, snatched the old hag up in his arms and ran over to the boat, her shrieks and raving sounding shrill and terrible.

The rage of the Esquimaux was instantly aroused.

Fearful that harm to their witch would reflect disaster upon themselves, they piled on top of Frank, knocking him down, and while some attacked his friends, the rest made a dash for the boat to rescue the old witch.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE HOME OF THE WITCH.

"KEEP the boat going across the neck of that promontory, down into that valley, and we will soon distance the Esquimaux, Barney."

"Faith, it's a good brace av pistols as would be after droppin' thim, docthor dear," replied the Irishman, turning the wheel.

"I've done locked dat ole witch woman inter de kitchen," said Pomp, coming into the pilot house, all out of breath. "She done fight like a tiger cat, by golly! But whar am Massa Frank?"

"Monsieur Reade deed not come on board," said St. Malo.

Frank's three friends were startled, as they thought he had come on board with them, and glanced back.

Several miles astern, they beheld an exciting scene.

Frank was coming in pursuit of the boat on a pair of skates which Peter Jensen had lent him, pursued by all the natives of Tessuisak, who also wore steel runners on their feet.

The Esquimaux were skillful skaters, but Frank Reade, Jr., was equally as smart with them, and being encumbered with less bulky clothing, and having longer legs than the northern Indians, he not only kept his lead on them, but was gaining.

He held his rifle grasped in both hands, was half bent over, and came along with extraordinary speed.

In the first attack at the settlement Jensen had snatched him up, carried him bodily into his house, strapped the skates upon his feet, and let him out by a back window to go in pursuit of the boat, which he had seen speeding away.

The Esquimaux were furious over the abduction of the witch, for they expected nothing short of the direst misfortune to fall upon them as a result of it, and determined to rescue her.

She had explained to them that it was Frank who designed the deed, and their anger was consequently turned wholly upon him.

Yelling and hurling missiles at him, they came sweeping on over the ice at a terrific rate, and made every effort to catch him.

Never in his life had Frank ever skated so fast before.

Right and left he struck out, and when he found that his enemies had put on skates, too, and were pressing him hard, he fired several shots back at them.

Still they did not stop their headlong rush, and he then strained every muscle to distance them by fast skating.

Foot by foot he edged further and further away from them, until at last he was a hundred yards in advance.

The ice boat had come to a pause upon its inmates seeing the jeopardy of his position, and he made a bee-line for it, as he knew that his only safety laid in getting on board ahead of the angry natives.

A whistling arrow passed his head when he arrived within fifty yards of the boat, and he turned to fire another shot at his followers, when his foot struck a projecting lump of ice, and he pitched over headlong, flat on his face.

His rifle flew out of his hand, and slid along the surface of the ice some distance away.

A yell of delight burst from the savages.

They came flying up to him, and in a moment the whole band were encircling the fallen man.

Frank had struck his forehead upon the ice, and was momentarily stunned, but he pulled his wits together and jerked a pistol out of his belt, just as a dozen spears were drawn back and aimed at his heart to pierce him.

"Back with you!" he cried, in the Esquimaux tongue.

He accompanied this command with seven shots, and seven men fell wounded, and the rest recoiled in alarm.

To get upon his skates only occupied a moment, and Frank sped away toward the boat again, fairly bursting through the ranks of his enemies.

He recovered his rifle.

As he came dashing up to the boat, still followed by the Esquimaux, the crew of the Snow-Bird opened fire upon the natives, and drove them back in wild disorder.

Frank then got on board of the ice boat.

"Off with you!" he cried, entering the cabin.

Barney started the machinery, and the boat fled down into a valley or wide gorge bounded on all sides by lofty cliffs that were broken by immense clefts which had a most glaring and forbidding aspect as they frowned underneath the great white caps that untold winters had woven around their lofty heads.

Fifteen gusts of wind came moaning down the gorge chillingly.

Up the gorge was the glacier of Aukpadlartok, upon which the sun shone brilliantly, from which gathered a stream of limpid water that came rushing down over the rocks, breaking in falls and whirling in pools, and then going on toward the sea.

The Snow Bird went up the gorge to a point where the cliffs arose almost perpendicularly from the border of the stream, and were scarcely more than thirty yards apart.

The water rushing between them added to the roar of the wind which seemed to accumulate beyond, and force itself through the narrow passage, greatly heightened the gloomy aspect of the scene.

Going on, reaching the summit of the falls, and coming out on a level plain of great extent, the boat stopped.

In this wild and desolate place close to the fall, and beneath the glacier the Esquimaux witch had years before taken up her residence and from there she sent forth her supernatural decrees which had such an effect on the natives.

The natives called the glacier "The Devil's Castle," and the valley itself "The Valley of the Winds," naming it after the witch.

The wind, accompanied by fitful gusts of snow howled and shrieked along the cliffs, and as the boat came to a pause, an ancient raven with a ragged coat flopped down on a nearby rock, and set up a dismal croak, while the snow beat down around about him.

Then he walked off deliberately, muttering to himself the while in mournful tones, and mounting the ruined wall of the witch's hut, he cocked his head on one side and looked at the boat in a sinister way out of one eye, after which he hopped over to the edge of the fall, stood on one leg, and peered over into the foaming abyss below.

There was a double echo from his voice, and it rebounded from cliff to cliff, until it seemed as if the air was peopled with the imaginary spirits that infested the witch's quarters.

None of the Esquimaux approached nearer than within fifty feet of the place, as they held it in such great awe.

The boat had hardly come to a pause, when

Frank heard one of the doors that opened on deck shut with a loud bang.

"The witch is escaping!" he cried, running out.

"Golly!" gasped Pomp, following him. "Dar I'se gwine an' lef' dat do' unlocked, arter alookin' up all ob de yoddars."

"Look how wiry she is for such an old hag!" exclaimed Frank, pointing at her, as she nimbly leaped over the railing to the icy ground. "I'm sorry I've taken off my skates, but I'll follow her anyway."

"Wha' fo'?" Why doan yo' leabe de ole hussy go?" growled Pomp.

"No! She will bolt back to Tessuisak and bother the life out of Peter Jensen if she gets away, and I told him I'd carry her so far away she couldn't reach him again in a hurry."

Frank jumped down to the ice and followed the old woman upon whose shoulder the raven had perched itself, for it had formerly been her pet, and now recognized her.

She ran swiftly along the edge of the stream, and did not pause until she reached her abandoned hut, into the low door of which she dove and vanished.

Frank followed close at her heels.

The solitary room in the wretched dwelling was dark and gloomy, but Frank lit a match, and glancing around for some signs of the witch, he failed to see her.

She had vanished behind a door that led into the face of the ice-cliff at the back of the room.

As soon as Frank opened it a cold draught struck him, and caused him to recoil; then he drew out several matches, lit one, and darted into the tunnel ahead of him.

It was a cleft in the towering cliff of ice.

Ahead of him he heard the receding footsteps of the old woman, and he ran after her, holding the match so the flame would not go out.

Suddenly arriving at a bend in the passage, just as his match burnt out, he saw a bright glare of fire ahead of him.

It was in a large cavern into which the passage opened, and came from a heap of logs burning on the floor in the middle of the chamber, the hag and a man standing beside it.

The companion of the witch was a tall individual, attired in a suit of furs, the peaked cap drawn upon his head, and a long dark beard covering his face, indicating that he was a white man.

Frank paused at the entrance to the cavern.

The lurid gleam of the firelight playing upon the two lent them a diabolical look, for the man had as evil looking a face as the old woman, and was bending over her while she spoke.

Frank listened to what they were saying, as they spoke in Danish, and he could understand every word uttered.

"He won't pursue you in here," the man was saying.

"Oh," returned the witch, shaking her disheveled gray hair, "you do not know what a determined man this Frank Reade is."

"Then should he venture," hissed the man with a glowering look, "he will not go out alive. Do not go up on the cliff as you desired. Stay here. And now tell me the news."

"You want to hear about Peter Jensen's money, eh?" chuckled the witch.

"That is why I sent you to take up your abode in Tessuisak."

"Well, I have discovered that the Danish government gives him twenty-five dollars a year, and five per cent on the productions of the place, which amounts to five thousand dollars a year."

"Then his commission is two hundred and fifty dollars a year?"

"Yes, that is two seventy five with his salary."

"Don't he make any more?"

"Outside of that he makes about two hundred on his own speculations."

"That is four seventy five. Now how long has he been doing this?"

"Five years, and never spends a penny, but saves his money."

"He must have \$2,375 in money, hidden in his house."

"That is just what I calculated."

"We must wrest it from him."

"That is easily done. Start an uprising of the natives, and they will kill Jensen and his whole accursed brood. We can then take possession of his house, and search it until we find his gold. Then we go to Upernavik, and leave Greenland on the first ship."

"Annor-asnak, you have done well. We can return to England, from whence we came, by breaking from jail, and stowing away on the whaler which we escaped from off these shores

two years ago. No one will remember us. Jensen's money will give us a new start in life, until I meet with my old friends and get back into my good profession of cracking safes, and stopping stage coaches."

They both laughed long and loud, and the raven croaked dismally.

Frank was greatly edified by their dialogue. It gave him an insight to the history and purposes of the evil pair, and showed him why the woman had gained for herself the reputation of being a witch, among the superstitious Esquimaux.

"I won't bother them now," thought the inventor. "I'll quietly go away, return to Jensen's house, alarm him, and catch the villains in the act of robbing him. With such direct evidence of their guilt we can justify severely punishing these two escaped convicts."

He was just about to silently retreat when the raven espied him, uttered a hoarse croak and flew at him with extreme animosity.

Frank aimed a blow at the savage bird, but ere it fluttered away from him it caught his handkerchief in its sharp beak, and pulling it out of his pocket it flew back to its mistress.

The two conspirators were alarmed at the black bird's actions.

When they saw it come back with Frank's handkerchief they knew that the inventor was in the passage, watching and listening.

The hag pointed at the aperture in the wall with one boney finger.

"He is there!" she shrieked, covering back.

"I will have his life sooner than let him warn Jensen!" cried the big man, seizing an enormous club of branchwood.

Frank clapped his hand to his belt. He had left all his weapons on board the ice-boat.

It would be a difficult matter to cope with the witch's companion he saw, and as there depended the lives of Jensen and his family upon being warned in time Frank resolved to retreat.

The convict dashed toward the passage and Frank turned around and ran back the way he had come.

He heard the man coming on rapidly, and accelerated his pace to a swift run back to the door.

When he reached it he was cut, bruised and scratched from striking against the walls of the dark passage in his flight.

All out of breath he pushed against the massive door.

But it refused to move.

It was caught by a latch on the inside, and he did not know by what means to lift it, as he could not find the handle.

The footsteps of the man in pursuit of him drew nearer every moment, and Frank braced himself for a hard struggle in his narrow quarters.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BURIED UNDER THE SNOW.

THE moment the gigantic friend of the witch met Frank in the passage at the latched door he felt his contact with the inventor, and drawing back a step he aimed a blow at him with his club.

Frank expected it and dropped flat on the floor before the man's weapon cleft the spot where he had been standing.

The club struck the wall of the passage, and stung the man's hands so much that he nearly let it fall.

Before he could recover the use of it Frank darted between his legs and arising with the convict straddling his neck he pitched him over head first upon the floor.

In his fall his head struck violently against the heavy plank door and the club fell from his hands.

Frank turned around swiftly, tripped over the convict's body and falling down on top of him he grasped the fellow by the throat.

He had to depend wholly upon his hands for defense, as he had left his weapons on the Snow Bird, and as the man began to violently struggle he had the utmost trouble in preventing the fellow from getting upon his feet.

In the midst of the struggle the witch ran into the passage from the cavern with a flaming firebrand in her hand.

It cast a shadowy glow upon the fiercely struggling men, and the old woman began to shriek to her companion in Danish.

"Throttle him, Edmond! Don't let him escape! Once he gets back to Tessuisak and tells Peter Jensen all he overheard us plotting we will not secure his gold!"

"Shut up, you hag!" panted Frank, getting his knees pressed upon his enemy's bosom. "Get out of here, else when I am done with this scoundrel I'll attack you!"

"He won't get away!" hissed the man, fighting with all his might to get free of Frank's clutch. "I won't let him!"

With a violent effort he rolled Frank over, and, getting him underneath, he eagerly picked up his heavy club from the stony floor, and raised it to batter his head in.

But just as he was about to bring it down the door flew open, and into the passage sprang Pomp!

He had followed Frank from the ice boat in his pursuit of the witch when she made her escape.

The darky was armed with a brace of revolvers.

He uttered a cry when his glance fell upon the thrilling sight before his gaze, and he came to a pause, drew a pistol out of his belt and aimed it at the startled convict.

"Stop, or I'll see gwine ter fire!" he yelled, frantically.

Edmond lowered his club, sprang to his feet, and knocked the lurid fire brand from the hands of the witch woman, who recoiled with a loud shriek.

It was extinguished, and the passage was bathed in gloom.

Frank felt Pomp assisting him to his feet.

"Scoot, Massa Frank!" whispered the darky, hurriedly. "I see wif yo' sah!"

"Don't let that couple escape!" replied Frank.

"They are husband and wife—convicts from England—escaped from some ship! They have planned to rob Jensen. We must put him on his guard!"

He lit a match as he spoke, and the passage was faintly illumined.

Edmond and Annorasuak ran away.

Frank and the darky ran after them, but they passed through the cavern, plunged through a doorway, and disappeared in a passage that led up on top of the ice cliffs.

"It is useless to follow them," said Frank. "They are bound to escape us now. Come on back to the boat."

They left the cavern, went through the passage, entered the witch's hut, and emerged into the sunlight at the base of the glacier.

The natives who had pursued the boat from Tessuisak had vanished, and Barney, Dr. Vaneyke, and the two French balloonists stood out on the deck of the stationary boat.

Frank told his friends what occurred as soon as he got on board, and then concluded by saying:

"Peter Jensen said that Upernavik is only fifty miles south of here on the coast. If we go back and warn him of his danger, he will give us directions to get there. If once we can reach the settlement, a whaler or sealer will ultimately come along and we can get passage on it back to civilization."

"Monsieur," said St. Malo, "I have repaired ze leetle compass zat you deed geet from ze Red Fox, an' 'ere eet eez."

He handed the compass to Frank, and the inventor saw at a glance that the magnetic needle was working properly.

"You are ingenious," commented the inventor, admiringly. "By the aid of this little instrument we can easily keep to the southward now."

Just then several ice blocks came flying down from the top of the cliff over their heads, and fell dangerously close to the boat.

Glancing up they saw the witch and her husband standing on the edge of the cliff, and the raven fluttering its sable wings over them while they hurled the blocks down in an effort to destroy the boat.

"This location is too dangerous to stay in," said Frank. "If we remain they will kill us. Let us hasten back to Jensen and warn him."

He put on electricity, grasped the wheel and turned the boat.

As it shot away out of the gorge, leaving Annorasuak and Edmond standing in a cloud of flying flakes in the roaring wind, they went down into the valley and dashed through an ambuscade of natives who had been pursuing them on skates.

Their weapons did no harm to the boat, however, and the Snow Bird fled on defiantly, and made tracks for the settlement.

The witch and her companion then disappeared from the top of the ice cliff, for they went to take a short cut to Tessuisak.

"It is going to be a race between us and the witch," said Frank, "to see who will get back to Jensen's house first."

"Then go like the deuce!" admonished the doctor. "That couple is one of the most malignant I ever had the misfortune to meet, and as they have a potent object in view to outstrip us in this race, they will make every effort to win the game."

Frank increased the speed of the boat until the buzzing of the spiked wheels was fairly deafening, and they fled by all objects with the speed of the wind.

Within a short time they reached the settlement.

There were only a few women and children in the place, and the house of Peter Jensen was deserted.

Frank alighted and approached one of the women.

She was inclined to run away from him in fear, but a few words from him soon allayed her alarm.

"I want you to tell me where Jensen is," said Frank.

"He went away with his family an hour ago," replied the woman.

"Do you know where he went to?"

"Yes. He said he was going to Upernavik in his dog sledge."

"Has Annorasuak come back yet?"

"No. But look, there she is now, with a man."

The witch and her companion had suddenly appeared from behind some distant hillocks, and stood pointing at the ice-boat.

They had taken a very short cut back to the settlement in order to have arrived there so soon after the fast-going boat, but having seen that the Snow Bird was there ahead of them, they did not dare to venture in the settlement.

For a moment Frank was inclined to drive them away, but upon second thoughts he remembered that they could not do any harm to Jensen, so he returned to the boat.

"The Dane has doubtless taken his money with him," said Frank to the old scientist, "and very likely won't return in a hurry."

"Shall we follow his trail?" It is the only way we have of getting there, since no one here will guide us to the place."

"Your suggestion is a good one, doctor, and we will follow it."

Barney was sent out to find the trail at the house, and as soon as he had it located, he called Frank over with the ice boat, and getting on board, he pointed it out.

The Snow Bird then darted off on the tracks which were plainly marked upon the snowy surface of the ice.

As soon as the boat left the settlement, the witch and her companion entered the village, but only to find themselves foiled.

Sails were raised on the Snow Bird, and the electric current was shut off, Pomp was posted on lookout, and Frank steered.

A dark, leaden hue had been overspreading the sky.

Frank glanced at the glass of a barometer St. Malo gave him.

"The mercury indicates a storm," said the inventor uneasily.

"Just our luck!" exclaimed the doctor, pettishly. "We no sooner are in want of clear weather, when fate turns against us."

"If it snows hard," said Frank, "these tracks will be obliterated."

"Then good-bye to Upernavik," said Dr. Vaneyke.

The wind began to rise, and sigh and moan through the rigging, the boat shot ahead faster and hail began to beat down.

Frank found it difficult to manage the boat, for the gale was coming from the northwest, and took a three-quarter sheet.

He opened the window.

"Take two reefs in the jib and foresail!" he cried.

"Yassir," replied Pomp.

"Single reef the mainsail, Barney!" continued Frank.

"Ay, ay, sor," answered the Irishman.

They both slackened the canvas, and tied it down with the reef points when the management of the boat became easier, she glided along more slowly, and less strain bore upon her masts and rigging.

"The trail is slowly, but surely getting wiped out," said Frank.

"When it is gone entirely," said the doctor, "we have one resource left. That is, to get over to the shore again and make use of the ice there. In no other way can we hope to find Upernavik for it lies on the coast."

"There isn't any shore ice here, doctor. The entire sea front is made up of icy cliffs at the

base of which the sea is rolling in a heavy surf. Can't you see it off there?"

"What are we to do then? Ahead there along the shore are rugged masses of ice over which travel in this boat is a sheer impossibility, for I can see from here that it is split up by chasms, ravines, and crevasses."

"Nor can we go over the rough hills," said Frank with a sharp glance at the distant ice. "All I can see is a trip around the base of those elevations. By skirting them as closely as possible, keeping on what smooth ice we can find, I have no doubt that we will be enabled after a while to get down to the coast. Look, it is snowing hard now."

"And the trail is hardly discernible."

"I'm going to keep on awhile longer, until we can get in under the protection of one of those cliffs for shelter."

"If we don't anchor soon we'll get lost in this blinding mist."

Frank steered the boat toward a rough mass of ice a few points off his port bow, and had a hard job to keep the enormous mountain of crimson snow in view through the obscuring veil of the down falling flakes.

Within a few minutes the boat reached the jagged ice hill and rounding up into the wind, close to the face of the cliff on that side, the brake was put on and she came to a pause.

Then out ran Barney and Pomp on deck, and loosening the halliards, they sent the fluttering canvas down to the deck with a rush, and made haste to furl it up.

Then the anchors were hove.

By the time everything was in ship-shape order, the snow was falling in such dense clouds that they could not see a yard in any direction from the Snow Bird.

A thick carpet of it was laid upon the boat and all around it.

Deeper and deeper it grew as the hours went by until at last it covered the decks, and then a watch was set and all hands turned in.

Frank was in the second watch.

He was called at three o'clock in the morning.

When he looked out he saw that the snow had drifted up around the boat as high as the windows, and was heaping still higher.

By the time his watch was over the windows were all obscured.

He turned in again for three hours sleep.

It was ten o'clock when he awoke.

By that hour the boat was entirely buried, only her two masts protruding above the snow to show that she was there.

A trap-door was opened in the roof of the cabin, some snow fell in, but a clearing was made and Frank went out on the roof and glanced around in amazement.

It was still snowing hard.

The depth of it everywhere was over ten feet.

"We are buried alive!" he gasped. "We can't get out of this in a hurry. What is to become of us now, I wonder?"

He descended into the cabin and shut the trap.

His three friends met him with anxious, questioning looks.

"Well?" asked the doctor. "You look despondent, Frank."

"We are buried in ten feet of snow. The depth is uniform all over."

"Isn't there any way to get out of it?"

"None whatever. We must remain here until it melts, or—"

"Or what?"

"If it rains on the snow, stops, and freezes over, we may never get away, but starve or perish, frozen under the snow!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE BROKEN ROPE.

"A SAIL! A Sail! We are saved, Frank, saved!"

"It is a ship coming this way, doctor, under full sail too!"

"Didn't I tell yez I seen it acoming beyant thim oice bergs?"

"G'wan, Barney, yo's allers acclaiming' de glory. 'Twuz me seed it fust."

"No matter who has the honor of first discovery, so long as it saves us."

"Decidedly, Frank, for I'm tired of being snowed in two weeks."

The four castaways stood on the sea shore eagerly scanning the huge vessel that was driving through the pack-ice toward them.

They had burrowed like ground-moles through the snow during their confinement in the boat, and their tunnel brought them out

upon the top of a glacier cliff that ran down sheer to the water, and there made an impassible barrier to the sea.

Below them, several miles away, a full-rigged ship was bearing toward the shore and found itself rebuffed by the heavy pack ice.

It was the first encouraging sight they had met with throughout the entire time they were lost in the land of desolation.

The cliff towered up a thousand feet, and its image was darkly reflected in the icy waters far below where the castaways stood.

Its face was fractured here and there horizontally, pieces of ice having splintered off from time to time, leaving a series of narrow steps which extended from the top to the bottom.

These ledges were the roosting places of myriads of lumme birds, popularly called "divers," whose loud screams and the fearful flapping of whose wings raised such a great noise Frank and his friends had to elevate their voices to make themselves heard.

The birds were sitting bolt upright on the ledges, packed close together facing outward, looking like soldiers with white coats and black caps standing shoulder to shoulder on parade.

This peculiar attitude was owing to the females laying but one egg which they placed on end on the ice with their long bills and sat on to hatch it out as if seated upon a stool.

As the ship drew nearer to the cliffs our friends began to shout, wave signals to the crew, and fire off their weapons to attract attention; but at the first shot of the fire arms, the scene changed.

The lumme's were frightened.

Every voice was instantly hushed.

Then every bird leaped into the air.

The wild flutter of their wings, was like the rush of a cyclone, a dark shadow from the millions of bodies was flung upon the water, and thousands of their eggs becoming loose, went down the face of the cliff in a shower.

The noise they made was so deafening as to drown the gun shots.

They lit upon the water, fluttered in the air, screamed loudly and fought each other with singular ferocity.

"The infernal things are preventing the crew of that ship hearing us, Frank."

"True, doctor," shouted Frank to make himself heard, "but you forget that the tremendous movement of that host of birds has attracted the attention of the whole ship's company up to this cliff, and when the birds settle back upon their nests, the crew of the vessel will be sure to see us."

"The birds are getting over their fright now and are returning."

"So they are. See how they are fighting each other down on the ledges. By Jove, doctor, they are stealing each other's eggs! The ones who lost their solitary egg by leaving them roll from the ledges have come back and taken possession of the first egg they met. The real owners return, contest the ownership, and that sets them quarreling, screaming and fighting each other."

"Queer birds!" commented the doctor.

"Very! Ah, the men on the ship see us, and are signaling!"

"They can't get close up to the shore on account of the pack ice out there."

"Nor can we get down to them, to board their ship unless we scale the face of the cliffs, for there is a barrier line high as this, miles upon miles up and down the coast, doctor."

"Good heavens! You tell the truth, Frank."

"Rescue is almost within our grasp, yet we cannot take advantage of it, as the crew of the ship can't reach us, and we can't reach them. This situation is terrible—terrible!"

"Can't we drop a line down the face of the cliff and try to descend?" anxiously asked the old doctor. "There is no sign of a thaw by which we can get the boat out, and at this rate we will never reach Upernavik. Besides, another ship may never come within our sight again, away up here."

"We must try the experiment," said Frank.

"The ship has heaved to, and the people on her deck are watching us by the aid of their spy-glasses. Signal them."

"Is it a bit av rope yer wantin'?" questioned Barney.

"All the rope you can scrape up on the ice-boat."

"Bedad, it's enough I'll have, if it's me best shirt I have ter schtrip up an' toy in knots ter len'then ther rope."

"Pomp, go with him and lend a hand."

"Yas, sah; orright, sah," said the coon.

He and Barney then entered the tunnel in the snow, returned to the boat, secured some rope, and returned with it.

Tying the pieces together in one length, Frank secured an end of it to a projecting pinnacle of ice, and dropped the other end over the cliff, down towards the sea.

It did not descend more than half way to the bottom.

"Is this all the rope you could find?" asked Frank.

"That's all," replied Barney, "except the riggerin'."

"Can't you get some of the halliards or sheet lines?"

"Not widout burrowin' fer 'em."

"We must have them to get down to the ship."

"Then it's back we'll go fer 'em, sor," said Barney, starting off with Pomp and disappearing within the shaft.

Frank and the doctor saw the German flag floating at the truck of the ship, and assured that the crew saw them and would lend them their aid, they patiently waited for Barney and the ducky to return with the rope.

Five minutes of inactivity thus passed by.

Then Frank gave a sudden start, turned pale, grasped the doctor's arm, and pointing off to the northeast, he cried:

"See there! Here we are to be balked again."

"What is it?" anxiously questioned the doctor, glancing around.

"A sea fog coming."

"It will soon reach us."

"Fearful of wreckage on the shore, the ship will put out to sea."

"Then that will be the end of our chance."

"Without a doubt, doctor."

"Oh, why don't Barney and Pomp return?"

"It takes time to accomplish what they have got to do."

"Frank, I can hardly restrain my impatience."

They both cast eager glances alternately at the ship down below, at the fast approaching fog-bank, and at the snow shaft.

Long before the negro and Irishman put in an appearance, the dense vapor went pouring over the edge of the cliff and rolled out on the sea, half hiding the ship from view.

Frank and the doctor were filled with dismay, for they saw the ship wearing about with all speed to get out to sea.

It was too dangerous to remain so close to shore.

In the partial gloom of the fog, the vessel was apt to run against the ice barrier, and become a hopeless wreck.

With plenty sea room they would escape that danger, and seeing that they could now do no good, and having more regard for their own lives than charity toward the strangers, whom they were willing to help under ordinary circumstances, they now chose to protect themselves.

"They are deserting us, Frank," said Dr. Vaneyke aghast.

"I see. We can't blame them for looking out for themselves first."

"No. Ah, here comes the boys with the rope now."

"Too late. However, we'll add it to the other, and wait for the fog to clear away, as soon as the wind springs up. We may yet be able to get on board of that ship."

"You are very hopeful, and cheer me wonderfully."

"It don't pay to despair until all hope is absolutely gone."

Barney and Pomp now ranged up through the fog to them with the extra ropes, silently swearing at their ill-fortune.

The pieces were tied to the rope already down.

By this time the ship disappeared in the fog which now became very dense down upon the water, as well as on the land.

Long and anxiously the four castaways stood upon the brow of the great ice-cliffs waiting and watching for the fog to clear away, and hour after hour of painful suspense and eager hope passed by.

The wind began to rise, and sigh among the beetling crags of ice, and as it increased in force, the fog began to roll along.

"It will soon vanish now," said Frank, steadfastly watching it.

"But will the ship still be down below us?" asked the doctor.

The fog began to rise to a certain height over the sea, and there it hung, rolling along like dense billowy clouds without permitting the eager watchers catching a glimpse of the water.

"Begob," said Barney, presently, "it's out

av patience I am wid it entoirely, an' it lucks ter me as if it wouldn't go away at all at all."

"A current of wind sweeping over the surface of the sea lifted it," said Frank, "and it may not rise any higher in some time."

"This is like hovering in one of your flying ships over the clouds, Frank," said Dr. Vaneyke, "when we couldn't see the earth below."

"What is the matter with going below the fog banks then, to see if the ship is yet there, and give it a hail?" suggested Frank.

"How—by sliding down the rope?"

"Of course. If you will steady it, I'll go down."

Eagerly anxious as they were to find out if the ship was yet beating about there, to take them away, and seeing no cause for alarm in what Frank proposed, they all assented.

For security's sake the three caught hold of the rope, and the inventor slid down upon it with the agility of an acrobat.

Down, down, down went Frank from that dizzy height with cool, calm nerves, the motions of his body swaying the long rope to and fro, bumping him against the icy ledges, and scaring up thousands of lummes with a loud noise of voices and wings.

He was soon so far down, buried in the fog banks, that his friends lost sight of him.

Swarms of the noisy cliff birds flew about him in vast clouds, and many of them struck him, almost dislodging him, but he cried out, scaring them off with his voice.

Pieces of ice were broken off the ledges, and clattered down in showers upon Frank; he was pelted with falling birds' eggs, and he got many a stinging blow from the beating wings of the lummes.

He kept on, however, and presently emerged under the fog.

There he had an excellent view of the sea.

But the ship was gone.

Afar in the dim distance he caught a momentary view of it, fast bearing away from the shores, half enveloped in a fog cloud.

Frank's heart sank as the ship vanished.

"Farewell!" he muttered dejectedly. "That is the last I'll see of you!"

And he was right, the ship never came back.

Its crew lost the bearing of the place where the castaways stood on the cliff top, and did not know where to return to find them.

Frank had reached the extreme end of the rope.

He then swung about fifty feet above the sea.

Breakers were dashing in against the base of the icy cliffs under his swinging body, bursting into foam and spray which was flung up high in the air with a bellowing roar.

He watched the ship until it disappeared, then a great sigh of disappointment escaped his lips, and bitter reflections thronged his mind.

"We are doomed to constant misfortune!" he muttered. "I'll go up and tell the boys of my discouraging news."

Attracted by the birds' eggs on the deserted ledges near him, he began to fill his pockets with them, while he hung with one arm and the rope coiled around one of his legs.

He soon had as many as he could carry with ease, and then began to climb up the rope toward the top.

But suddenly he paused and listened.

There had come a tremor through the rope.

Instinctively he realized what was happening.

The rope chafed on the edge of a ledge, and it's breaking!" he muttered.

He heard a dull snap, and felt a sudden jarring.

Then the rope parted!

A wild, warning yell pealed from his friends.

The next instant, down he fell like a shot, clutching in his hands the broken rope, the rest of which came down on him.

A stifled cry of alarm pealed from Frank's lips.

His body spun around in the air, became tangled in the rope, and then he struck a row of the lummes standing on a ledge beneath him with such a shock that several were killed outright.

The rest flew away.

Frank's body bounded from the ledge, spun around, and down he went with the first force of his fall broken toward the icy sea, into which he plunged.

In a moment his body vanished beneath the water.

CHAPTER XL.

SCALING THE CLIFFS.

The ledge upon which Frank struck when the rope broke was twenty feet below him, but the bodies of the birds which he landed on softened a shock that would have stunned him had they not been there.

From the ledge to the sea was a distance of thirty feet more.

But the yielding water of the breakers did him no harm, and he sank into the water in full possession of all his faculties without a pain, and still grasping the broken rope.

When the chafed line parted Barney, Pomp, and the doctor knew at once that Frank must have fallen down into the sea, and the direst misgivings thronged their minds over the matter.

Pulling upon the rope as they had been, as soon as it was relieved of Frank's weight they all fell down.

When they arose and peered over the edge of the cliff they could not see anything of Frank on account of the drifting fog banks.

"Now the sheet lines of the frozen-in ice-boat are lost, too!" the old scientist exclaimed despondently. "Could Frank have been killed?"

"I specs he am a goner," groaned Pomp, dolefully.

"Shure, an' it depinds upon how far he fell ter reach ther wather," logically said Barney.

"Mebbe he's a schwimmin' now."

"See the sharp edge of the cliff upon which the rope chafed," said the doctor. "It is no wonder to me that it parted in twol!"

"Why doan' dat fog lif?" growled Pomp.

"Can't see nuffin' undah it."

"How is we ter find out if Masther Frank is dead or alive?" exclaimed Barney.

"Och, sorra's the moment he wint down ther rope ter git below ther fog an' foind out what become av ther ship!"

"Our situation momentarily becomes worse," said the doctor. "There Frank's gone, we are lost within fifty miles of Upernavik, the Snow Bird is buried under the snow, our sheet lines are lost with Frank, and here we have got to stay, helplessly waiting for a thaw."

The three glanced at each other dejectedly, not knowing what to do.

Several hours passed by, during which they shouted incessantly for Frank, and got no response, after which they retired into the tunnel through the deep snow, and began to plan out a course of action.

In the meantime the ice above the Snow Bird had begun to crack and break off, falling in tremendous masses all around the boat, plunging through the deep snow with dull intonations, and threatening to smash the ice-boat to pieces!

At the first note of alarm, the doctor went up on the roof, and glancing around in terror, he saw what the cause of the trouble was.

The sight appalled him, and with reason.

Directly above the boat was a bulging mass of hanging ice that looked as if it might come down at any moment!

Out of the shadow of the cliff, where the sun shone, the snow had melted down to a few feet in thickness, through which the boat could easily force its way slowly, under the electric current.

But a distance of several hundred feet separated it from the deep drift in which the boat was then buried.

"If a passage can be made for the boat from this spot over to the shallow snow," muttered the doctor, "we might stand some show to get away. Here the sun never penetrates, and it may be months before a thaw comes to liberate us. Before such a thing can occur that mass of ice will fall and crush us!"

He went down into the boat.

After the first downfall, the shower of ice blocks ceased.

The doctor explained their situation to the rest.

"Can't we shovel a path out?" asked Barney.

"It would take a week to do it. Before then the ice above will fall."

"Wha' de matiah wif meltin' de snow?" suggested Pomp suddenly.

"How can it be done?"

"Wif de lectric wires, sah!"

"By Jove, that is a good plan, Pomp."

The coon showed his white teeth in a broad grin, delighted at his idea proving a success, but he said helplessly:

"But I dunno how we kin do it, sah."

"Oh, I'll attend to that," smiled Vaneyke.

"If we can generate heat for your kitchen stove, we can make it melt the snow. I'll fix it."

He secured a lot of blankets, moistened them well with water, attached the poles of the electric machine to them, and started a current, after he had laid the blankets upon the snow.

A tremendous current was generated, and thawed the snow under the blankets so fast that it was not long before they melted the drift all around the boat, and then a passage for it was started.

The doctor managed the electric current, in the pilot-house, and Barney and Pomp worked rapidly with the blankets, water flowed away in streams so warm that the surrounding snow was undermined and caved in all along the passage, and the boat was forced ahead.

Slowly but gradually the Snow Bird was forged on until at last she reached a shallow snow, and went through it like a plow.

She had not been out of her anchorage an hour before the overhanging mass of ice fell with a thunderous crash.

"We escaped none too soon," grimly said the doctor.

"Yo' ain't gwine away afo' yo' see wha' become ob Massa Frank?"

"No, Pomp—of course not. I only wanted to save the boat."

"Bedad it's only wan or two days more av thawin' we'll be afther wantin' here," said Barney, looking around, "afere this hot sun cuts down ther schnow ter ther oice, an' gives us a clane schkate back ter Upernavik, pursuin' av Pether Jensen an' his family."

"To follow the shore, we'll have to skirt the base of these tremendous hills," said the doctor, "and that will bring us far inland."

"Let's lave ther boat here wid ther Frinch-min," said Barney, "an' we'll go back ter ther shore. I'm agoin' ter thry ter cloimb down ther face av that cliff on ther ledges, an' foind Masther Frank."

They took some lines and went back to the shore where they began to examine the ledges, with a view to climbing down from one to the other.

There was at least a dozen feet between each shelf, and they ran at irregular intervals, and were not directly underneath each other.

Such a descent was hazardous in the extreme, but Barney had his mind made up to attempt it, in order to ascertain what became of Frank.

He carried a pistol, knife, and short-handled hook, to which a piece of rope was attached with which to scale the ledges.

He expected to climb up the way he went down.

Catching the hook on the edge of the cliff, he slid down to the first ledge below, landed in safety, shook the hook free, it fell beside him, and he then leaped across the face of the cliff to a smaller ledge, a short distance below, and only a few feet away from the one he was on.

He had covered his boots with pieces of skin, with the hair side out, so that he would not slip and fall.

From the last ledge he dropped down his rope again, swung off, and was about to slide down ten feet, when the ice to which the hook was caught suddenly broke, the hook gave away, and he fell.

Barney struck upon his feet upon the ledge, clutching the rope, tried to hold his balance, fell over flat, and slid off the ledge.

Down he went to the jutting shelf a few feet below, where he struck with a shock upon his back that made him see stars.

But he did not roll off, as there was plenty of space around him.

He got upon his feet feeling somewhat scared, for there were over nine hundred feet yawning beneath him.

"Be heavens, I'm alive!" he gasped.

His two friends were more frightened than he was, as they laid flat on top of the cliff and peered over, intently watching all his actions.

"Be more careful!" shouted Dr. Vaneyke.

"Watch where you plant the hook."

The Irishman heeded this advice.

He did not want to kill himself.

It was hard, dangerous, suspenseful work, but the Irishman bravely kept on, scaring away hundreds of lummes from every ledge upon which he descended, until he was lost to the view of his friends, in the fog.

Then his danger increased, for he could not see the ledges below him, and sometimes had to creep along the full length of the ledge he was upon, peering down, and sounding with his hook for a shelf before he dared to venture over, to reach the next step below.

But he managed to get half way down.

He was then upon a broad shelf, as smooth

as glass, that was covered with birds' eggs, deserted by the lummes.

There he paused to rest.

It was a very long ledge, and ran down at a steep angle that was sure to bring him considerable distance further toward the bottom.

Barney lit his pipe.

"Faith, it's a human floy I am, a-crawlin' down this wall," he reflected.

There sounded a tremendous noise off in the fog just then—the wild screaming of a flock of birds, the whistling of their beating wings, and the Irishman saw the fog banks become violently agitated.

An instant later a vast flock of the birds burst out of the mist.

They were darting straight towards him, screaming loudly.

As was intimated before, these birds are savagely jealous of their eggs, and as Barney was destroying a great many under foot, their anger was aroused against him.

To Barney's amazement, they attacked him with their long bills, and beat him with their powerful wings, to drive him away from their barren nests.

He sprang to his feet and pulled out his pistol.

"Bad cess to yez!" he cried. "Git away from here!"

He fired the seven shots at the birds, and drove them back, but they soon recovered from their fright, and attacked him again on all sides, pecking painfully at his flesh, and beating him so hard with their wings, that when half a dozen assailed him together, he was knocked down.

More and more astonished at the bold courage of the birds in defense of their eggs, Barney kicked and rolled, yelled and beat at them, and came near going over the edge of the icy shelf.

Then he drew out his knife.

The screaming, fluttering birds were dauntless, and returned to the attack again and again with such persistence that the poor Irishman resolved to fly for his life, for he had but little room in which to move about defending himself, and one false step would launch him over the cliff to his doom in the surging waves.

Striking out right and left with his knife, he felled many of the screaming birds and littered the ledge with their feathers.

Then he ran away.

Going down the sloping ledge, he scared up more of the birds.

They fled at his approach, and he dashed along, the path narrowing and widening alternately until he came to the end of it.

There it doubled upon itself.

Still inclining, it continued to bring him down toward the sea.

Presently he came to the end of the ledge, which brought up at a wall of ice in which there was a narrow cleft that ran to the right.

The opening was large enough to admit Barney's body, and he went in, and found himself in a large fissure that penetrated the cliff.

"Begob, it goes down'ards," muttered Barney. "I'll folly it, an' see where it do lead."

The further down he went, the wider the fissure became, until at last after descending several hundred feet, the Irishman found himself in an immense cavern, wrapped in partial gloom.

One side of it was evidently the face of the cliff, for the light of day streamed through the transparent wall and broke the gloom.

Intense silence reigned in the vast crystal cavern.

Barney kept to the transparent, glass-like wall, and following it along, he kept descending deeper and deeper under the ice until at last the sound of rushing water caught his hearing.

"Arrah, now, but that sounds loike a schtrame av wather, so it do," he muttered, pausing and listening. "I niver heered ther same noise agurghin', except whin I had a whisky bottle to me lips."

With his curiosity aroused, he penetrated further and further down in the gloomy depths of the great cavern, and presently came to the edge of a rapid, narrow river, that came flowing from a large, arched passage back in the cave, and ran toward the transparent wall.

Barney followed it, and a dull thunder of surf met his ears on the outside of the wall, by which he knew that he was down to the sea.

The stream ran out of an opening in the ice, and gushed into the salt brine on a line with the surface, the beating surf often dashing in through the aperture in foamy masses.

Then the truth of his position dawned upon Barney.

"Begorra, it's undher a glacier I am," he muttered; "an' this wather is from ther meltin' oice, so it is. But it's out av that openin' I'll have ter be afther goin' if it's Masther Frank I want ter foind."

He found the ice very slippery about the orifice of the river, and crept out upon it with cat-like care, to save himself from falling.

The wall of the cliff was over twenty feet in thickness, and the sea had worn the aperture as smooth as the inside of a bottle.

By the aid of his hook Barney kept on, however, and slowly made his way toward the outer edge of the opening, where he saw daylight.

He had gained nearly half the distance, when a tremendous breaker came rushing in, and burst against the cliff with a thunderous discharge.

Tons of water flew in the opening and enveloped Barney.

He was knocked down into the stream, blinded and gasping, and the swift, powerful current catching him, he was swept out upon the sea, clinging to a lump of ice he grasped in the water.

His body receded swiftly from shore, and whirled around and around.

Then another wave swept up, grasped the struggling Barney, and with a bellowing roar it rushed in toward the icy cliff with him, hurling him up against it with a terrible shock!

CHAPTER XL.

THE SEA UNICORN.

WHEN Frank fully came to his senses, after the confusion of his fall, he found himself upon the surface of the sea.

To get out of the pounding surf he swam seaward, and after a hard struggle he reached the pack ice through which the German ship had been forcing its way, and got upon a large floe.

Lying prostrate, several hundred feet from the cliffs, upon the ice, he soon recovered his breath and strength.

Then he glanced up at the fog banks over his head, that were rolling along with the wind like the clouds of heaven.

He could not see his friends.

Then he glanced around at the ice.

The floes nearest the shore were giving way to the rollers.

Having drifted in so near the shore, they felt the influence of the undertow and the breakers, and were setting in toward the cliffs.

"If I don't get on the other side of the pack," muttered Frank, arising, "this part of the floe will soon go to pieces, and the breakers will hurl it up against the foot of the cliffs with me."

He ran out from the shore, springing from one piece of ice to the other with extreme agility, and presently gained a solid mass some miles in extent, and followed the surface southward, wondering what his friends up on top of the cliffs would think had become of him.

Attracted by a dark object lying amid a mass of ice, he made his way toward it, and upon a near approach, he found to his surprise that it was a large whale boat, standing upright upon its keel.

There were several boxes and barrels lying scattered around it, pieces of timber, rigging, and torn canvas.

Delighted over the discovery, Frank hastened up to it to see if the boat was seaworthy, and peered over the gunwale.

Inside of it were several oars, a broken jury-mast, an unshipped rudder, and crouched up under the thwart in the bow laid two men.

They were dead—frozen stiff.

A shudder passed over Frank as his glance fell upon their white, rigid faces, their fallen jaws and distended eyes.

Not a particle of food was to be seen anywhere.

Nor was there any name upon the boat to indicate where she came from, or what the nationality of the men was.

Frank could only judge by the appearance of the two bodies that the unfortunates were Germans, Danes or Swedes.

He made a close examination of everything, and lifting the men out of the boat upon the ice he searched their pockets to discover if possible who they were, but did not learn anything.

They only had a few trifling articles such as most sailors have in their pockets, but Frank noted the absence of matches and food, and observed that the jaws of both men were very much wasted.

"They have become weak from starvation," he muttered, "and unable to go about must have lain down in the boat where the intense cold froze them to death."

There was a small grotto near by into which he carried them.

"It will be only a temporary grave for the poor fellows," he thought, "for it's only a question of time for this floe to go to pieces. I'll make an effort to launch the boat and save myself."

There was an opening in the pack ice quite near the boat, and Frank took one of the oars and broke the ice free as it had become frozen in the position it then occupied.

Once the boat was loose he had no trouble to push it over the glassy surface of the ice into the water.

He then got in and seizing the oars he shoved off from the icy shore, pulled along the lead and reached the open water.

The fog began to lift.

Eventually it arose above the top of the cliffs lining the shore, and Frank sat for half an hour gazing upon the bluffs to see some signs of his friends, but not a solitary figure met his view.

He was all alone.

Not a sound met his ears save the idle splashing of the waves, and the grating of ice against his boat, and the faint distant noises of the lummes far up on the face of the cliffs.

"If ever a human being was lost, I am, now," he muttered. "I don't know where I am, I don't know where my friends are, and don't know where to go! Miles upon miles up and down the coast all I can see is the ice barrier that shuts off all chance of getting upon land, and there is nothing between me and death but this leaky boat."

There was ice a foot thick in the bottom of the cranky old craft, which prevented the ingress of much water along the gaping garboard streaks, but other seams were sprung so that such considerable water came in, Frank had to pause rowing every few minutes to bail out.

After awhile the seams swelled together, however, and the garboards gradually closed up, lessening Frank's labor.

He had picked up an old, rusty harpoon in the bottom of the boat with a long line, in a fair state of preservation, attached to it, with which he now fended off all the larger cakes of ice that got in his way.

Directing his boat for the clear water, along the base of the cliffs he soon got where rowing was not so much trouble, and began to pull along the shore, in hopes that his friends would see him.

In this manner he got back to the neighborhood of the spot where the rope had broken with him.

"Howly mackerel! Schtop ther boat, beja-bers!"

Frank started at this cry reached his ears, glanced down, and there was Barney in under a bulging embankment, clinging to the ice.

"Well—I—swear!" ejaculated Frank in amazement.

"Haul to, an' pick me up!" roared Barney. "I'm schlippin', so I am!"

"For the Lord's sake how did you get down there?"

"Thundher an' loightnin'! If it isn't Masther Frank, I didn't know yer."

"Hold on. I'll have you in a moment!" cried Frank, rowing toward him.

He soon reached the Irishman, and pulled him on board.

They shook hands warmly, and Barney cried emotionally:

"Och, but it's garn we thought yez wuz, so we did."

"Did you climb down the face of that cliff?" "Shure an' I did that, more power ter me back bone!"

"Great heaven! How did you have the courage to attempt it?"

"Faith, I didn't. I wuz only thinkin' av foindin' you."

"Barney, I shall never forget your devotion."

"Arrah, but ther cowl'd seat I had! Shure I had a fine tussle wid ther waves, so I did, but I got back in the place where ye picked me up an' there I clung like a floy on the wall, so I did."

"Have you been there long?"

"Iver since ther breakers schlammed me up ag'in ther wall. But howld on, an' I'll be afther tellin' yer what happened me."

They quickly exchanged stories.

By the time they had finished, they arrived opposite the aperture in the cliff out of which the river was gushing.

"Shure, an' there's ther place now," said Barney pointing at it.
 "We will go in, and try to get up the cliff the way you came down."
 "Pull away then, but it's a hard row yez will have agin the tide."
 "These breakers will help us some."
 "Faith, it's ag'in' ther wall they may schlamme us."

Frank aimed the boat for the opening and began to pull hard, when a big breaker rolled in, caught the boat, and drove it headlong upon the fierce tide running out.

Buried in a mass of flying spray, the whale boat darted ahead and might have shot through the opening, had not the current swung the bow around, when it hit the side of the orifice with a crash.

The tide caught it abroadside, spun it around, and out it hurled the boat on the sea again before another breaker came in.

Barney picked up the old harpoon.

"I'll howl ther boat in close ter ther oice if yez will be afther pullin' inter that hole agin," said he, spitting on his gloves and rubbing them together.

"Get up in the boat, then," said Frank, "and I'll turn her around and—"

But he ended the sentence with a cry of alarm.

For, without any warning, the water ahead of the boat suddenly parted and up from the depths came a tremendous body, the upheaval of the water rocking the boat so that it nearly upset.

Barney grasped the gunwale to prevent himself toppling into the sea, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Frank prevented the boat going over by balancing it with the oars.

"Mother av Moses, wot is it?" gasped the scared Irishman.

"A fish, and a monster at that."

"Is it a whale?"

"No. Let me see—no; it's a narwhal, or sea-unicorn."

"But ther baste is fifteen feet in len'th, an' it's got a tusk ten feet long."

"That's because it is allied to the whale family. Only the males have such a tusk."

The creature resembled a porpoise, and was marbled brown and whitish, and began to blow a jet from the single spiracle on top of its head.

These fishes are considered the greatest curiosity in natural history, and the one in question was fighting with a giant cuttle-fish, upon which they live in the cold Arctic seas.

Barney let the harpoon fly at the monster.

"Take that, had cess ter yer, an' git out av me way!" he cried.

The barbed end of the spear struck the narwhal in the back, and it instantly ended its fight with the cuttle-fish, which thereupon sank.

A tremor passed through the narwhal.

Then it began to lash the water with its tail.

Beating about furiously a few moments, it circled around and around and then darted away parallel with the shore.

The rope attached to the harpoon began to play out rapidly.

Suddenly there came a violent jerk at the boat, and it dashed away through the icy water after the narwhal.

The rope was fastened to the whale boat.

Ahead went the fish, and after it raced the boat.

"Hello!" exclaimed Frank, jumping up.

"Are we fast to the line?"

"Shure ther ind av it is tied ter a ring-bolt in ther bow," said Barney.

"Cut it. The narwhal will carry us away from the opening in the base of the cliff. We may not find our way back. We will lose track of our friends. Cut it! Cut it, I say!"

"No!" replied Barney, "if I do we won't git out av this cracked ice. Let ther spalpeen pull us through it now, as it's got us into it!"

A rattling, ripping sound at the bow of the boat showed into what sort of water the harpooned fish was then pulling them.

The sea all around had its bosom frosted with cracked ice, and Frank saw that it would be hard work to row out of it.

"Let it go, then," he exclaimed. "It is not more than a half mile to the other side of this drift, and we will soon be through it."

But when they got in the middle of the bed of ice the narwhal came to a pause, turned around abruptly and swam back.

It seemed to know that the inmates of the boat were responsible for its misfortune, for it came for it full tilt, and with one fearful plunge it drove its long tusk through the boat!

The point of its formidable weapon grazed Frank's leg.

And there it stuck!

Wildly the narwhal fought to get its tusk out.

But it held firmly imbedded in the wood.

Frank raised one of his oars over his head.

"I'm going to break that horn in two," he exclaimed. "If we let the creature struggle so with the boat, it will soon capsize us."

"Bang!" came the oar down as he finished speaking.

The tusk was hollow, and the blow was so hard that it broke the tusk in two as cleanly as if it was done with an axe!

Instantly the narwhal began to recoil, dragging the boat with it, and with a sudden shock it pulled its broken tusk out of the boat.

A gaping aperture was left, through which the water began to spurt.

"Stop up that hole with a piece of rope," said Frank.

"Begorra it's dhrowned we'll soon be now!" gasped Barney.

He made an effort to do as Frank said, however, but the narwhal having drawn back a few yards, suddenly dashed at the boat again full tilt, and struck it below the water line with its broken tusk.

There came a terrific shock again.

Up out of the water the boat was dashed, and over it went on its port gunwale, the water pouring into it in vast volumes.

Frank and Barney were flung into the water and sank.

With savage ferocity the narwhal rushed at the now submerged boat and butted it again and again with its broken tusk until it was battered and broken beyond all use.

Frank arose to the surface.

"Barney!" he shouted.

"Here," replied the Irishman near by.

"Our boat is broken to pieces; we will have to swim."

"Bedad it's almost more'n I kin do ter schwim in this cracked ice."

"There goes the narwhal below the surface."

"Let's thry ter schwim fer ther shore, Masther Frank dear."

They struck out for it side by side, but swimming was exhausting in the broken ice, and they soon felt themselves tiring out.

To increase their trouble the narwhal came up again suddenly in front of them, and catching sight of the two swimmers, it sent its enormous body dashing toward them at full speed.

"Look out!" cried Frank, "The monster is going to attack us."

"I have nothin' but a knife ter defend meself, as me cartridges is garn," said Barney drawing it out. "But I'll do me besht wid it!"

CHAPTER XLII.

ON A ROCK.

THE narwhal had dragged the whale boat nearly a half mile from the opening in the base of the cliff, out of which the river poured under the spot where the ice boat had been standing.

Frank had a knife, and keeping close behind Barney, they faced the sea monster unflinchingly, now that its tusk was broken off.

Had the water been free of the cracked ice, they could have managed to move around much easier; as it was, they had the utmost difficulty even to attempt swimming to the shore.

The moment the narwhal was almost upon them, they separated, Frank going to the right, and Barney to the left.

The angry fish dashed between them.

Instantly they plunged their knives into its body, in passing, and with a convulsive movement it dove down below the surface.

"That's the end of it!" said Frank.

"Bedad, it may come up again," said Barney.

"I don't think so. Let us try to force our way through this ice again. We must get back to the cliff and try to get back to the boat by the way you came down through the cavern."

They swam leisurely, in order to reserve their strength, and finally managed to get out of the pack ice without accident.

From there to the foot of the towering cliffs was only a short distance, and they presently drew near the opening out of which the river gushed.

The fallen sheet lines of the boat were found floating, and they dragged them with them.

A smooth, slippery, shelving embankment was found, worn by the action of the waves, upon which they managed to get, and then, after a laborious creeping process, they got inside of the cavern with the ropes.

Frank was amazed at the size of it, and would have given vent to his impressions of wonderment, had not Barney cried in dismay:

"Bedad, I don't know which way I came down here!"

"You don't? Then how are we to get away?" quickly asked Frank.

"Shure an' it's a dozen paths I see, exactly loike ther wan I came down."

He pointed around the sides of the icy cavern, and Frank beheld a large number of sloping ledges that wound away up to the heights above.

"There is no use of us dallying here," said he, energetically. "If you have lost trace of the one you descended, choose one which you think to be the right path, and we will follow it up."

"Let's throy this wan," said Barney, after a moment's survey, and they went up the path he indicated as fast as possible, dragging the sheet lines after them.

But presently it branched away from the transparent wall.

"This can't be the right road," said Frank, upon noticing it.

"No, it isn't," acquiesced Barney, gloomily.

"Well, there's no use going back. Let's follow this one."

"It'd be loike huntin' fer a needle in a haystack. Come on."

They pursued the crevice a long distance, but it kept going upward all the time, and as Frank had his little electric lantern the darkness that began to envelope them was dissipated.

Within fifteen minutes they emerged from the crevice into the light of day on top of the cliffs, not far from the ice boat, amid some pinnacles.

"Hurroo!" yelled Barney, beaming with joy.

"Luck there!"

"The boat!" gladly cried Frank, running toward it, still dragging the ropes.

But they had not gone a dozen steps through the knee deep snow when they heard a wild shout, and glanced off to the left.

There was Dr. Vaneyke in a clearing amid the icy hills, firing his pistol at a pack of wolves that came down from the mountains.

The doctor expended all his shots and ran.

He could not run toward the boat, for too many of the lean, hungry brutes stood between him and the Snow Bird, so he ran in the opposite direction.

"Heaven help him," muttered Frank.

"They'll devour him!"

"Come fer ther boat, Masther Frank, an' we'll be afther savin' him."

They ran for the Snow Bird and sprang on board and drew in the ropes.

Pomp and the two Frenchmen were in the dining-room eating, and came rushing out when Frank and Barney dashed into the pilot house.

Frank did not waste any words in explanation just then.

"Arm yourselves and go out with Barney!" he cried.

They obeyed him without a word, for they realized at once from Frank's hurried manner that something of vital importance was occurring.

Frank started the electric current and away went the boat after the doctor and the wolves, while every one else went out on deck with their weapons and opened fire upon the beasts.

The poor doctor was plunging desperately knee deep through the snow, and the pack of ravenous beasts surrounded him and snarled at his heels when the firing began on the boat.

It scattered the beasts at once.

"Help! help!" shouted the doctor, as he slipped and fell.

With a rush and a buzz the boat reached him ere the last echo of his words died away in the distance, and the wolves scattered and fled in all directions before the Snow Bird.

Up jumped Vaneyke, struggling with the most daring of the beasts that ventured to spring at his throat, and Pomp jumped off into the snow with a knife in his hand and dispatched it.

The doctor was badly clawed and scratched by the beasts, but otherwise he suffered no serious injuries from his tussle.

He and Pomp got on board of the boat as hastily as possible, and Frank sent it flying after the howling wolves that were leaping in terror through the snow, and those upon the deck who yet had any ammunition left in their weapons kept up a constant fire upon the beasts.

In this manner over a score of the ravenous brutes were killed.

"How did you get into such a scrape, doctor?" queried Frank, when Vaneyke's first transports of amazement were over upon seeing Barney and the inventor safely back again.

"I went after a deer," replied the doctor. "It escaped, and the wolves suddenly appeared and attacked me."

Frank then explained to the rest what had befallen Barney and himself, and then the boat made a detour of the vast hills in order to get around to the coast again, while the sheet lines were rove again.

They had to go slowly and carefully, for the snow had filled holes and wide crevices in the ground athwart their course, into which they were apt to plunge before they saw the danger.

In this manner they ultimately got around to the coast again, and to every one's happiness saw that there was a vast field of shore ice lining the embankments, with very little snow upon it.

When the smooth, gleaming runners of the Snow Bird went gliding along over this sheet of glassy surface, under a cloud of billowy canvas, Barney got out his old fiddle, and Pomp got his banjo, a rattling tune was struck up, and to the strains of McLeod's reel, the boat swiftly bore the travelers away to the southward.

Upernavik was fifty miles from Peter Jensen's house, and Frank concluded that they ought to reach it within a very short time.

Unfortunately, however, he did not know in which location it laid, save that it was upon the coast to the southward.

"Barney, give us a song," said Frank, to break the monotony of the everlasting thumping of the coon on his banjo, and the heart-rending shrieking of the agonized fiddle. "We haven't heard from you in some time."

"Hab I got to play fo' dat ole army mule?" asked Pomp in disgust.

"Faith, it's disgracin' yer aould dish-pan av a music me warblin' do."

"Golly, wha' ye call dat ole broken-winded flog yo's ascrapin'?"

"Arrah, go soak yer head, it's softnin' av ther brain yez have entoirely, if yer can't tell good music whin ye hears it."

"That will do," said Frank. "Go on with your song."

"What'll it be?"

"Anything you like."

"Then whoop her up in K minor, Pomp, an' be heavens, I'll set yez crazy wid wan av ther dacintest chunes yez iver heard."

Pomp played the prelude to a song Barney mentioned, and the Irishman stood up and sang in rollicking tones:

"I'm a rattling Irish lad; you'll never foind me sad;
Be a turn av me wrist me schtick I twist,
I'm in for a foight, bedad!
All o'er ther world I've been, an' all ther soights I've seen,
Me whiskey I dhrink, wid niver a wink,
I schmoke me aould dhudeen."

I married Bid' McGee, years past, in ther aould country.
Faith, she powdered her nose, an' wore such foine clothes,
She wuz ther death av me!

An' though now we're apart, shure she has a sore heart,
I have her money; isn't it funny
That I was so very smart?

I've been in a county jail—I've been let out on bail;
I've cracked the big head of a walnut bed,
I've ridden on a rail!

I've been in a fearful flight, from morning until night,
Atryin' ter foind, by ther aid av a bloind,
A window let in the light.

The moment Barney paused, he began to dance a lively jig, and when it ended a storm of applause greeted his efforts.

Pomp then sang a camp meeting song for them, and thus the time passed until the hour to dine arrived, when the little concert was given up, and the coon went aft to prepare a meal.

After mile after mile sped the boat, but no sign of Upernavik was seen, watchful as all hands were for some signs of the settlement.

At last Frank brought the boat up in the wind.

"We must have passed the place!" he exclaimed. "We've traveled over one hundred miles."

"Then how are we to find it?" blankly asked the doctor.

"Retrace our way, and look closer. Do you notice the snow?"

"Yes. It is losing its crimson tint. Only patches of it here and there appear."

Frank took a spy-glass and leveled it at a distant lofty line of cliffs and hills far off to the southward of where they stood.

"Doctor," he exclaimed, "I have seen that land ahead there before. If it isn't Disco island I'm very much mistaken!"

"If we are south of Upernavik we ought to be near it, Frank."

"Then we will not go back, but proceed on to the island, and try to find Godhavn. We are bound to get succor there. All the Danish ships are obliged to go there to receive their orders from the inspector, both upon their arrival and departure from Greenland waters."

"Anything you say I'll agree to."

The ice was good ahead. Frank put the boat before the wind again, and she went spinning away at a lively rate.

Upon a nearer approach to the granite eminences, however, they found that an open sheet of water intervened between them and the mainland when they got within a league of it.

Moreover, the main shore presented an unbroken barrier of icy cliffs which they could not possibly expect to pass over.

"Only one course remains for us now," said Frank with a look of disgust at the predicament they were in. "We must either drive the boat into the sea to reach the island, or else we will have to go back the way we came from."

"Shure, she shwims loike a dook, so wha'ts ther use av goin' back?" asked Barney. "Faith it's doyin' I am fer a sail."

"But de watah am berry rough," objected Pomp, who had sore visions of sea sickness in view, and didn't fancy the prospect.

"I don't see where we can go to gain a passage southward by going back," said Dr. Vaneyke. "I'm for going ahead."

"Then here she goes," laughed Frank. "Lower the sails."

He started the wheels, and as the boat, shot along toward the edge of the water, Barney and Pomp went out, and lowered away the canvas to the deck.

A few moments afterwards the boat went splashing into the water and plowed her way along through the high, choppy waves toward the three miles distant shore.

The surface of the water was full of floating ice cakes, that dashed against the side of the boat heavily, but they rebounded harmlessly from the thin steel plates of which the Snow Bird was built.

Ever and anon a rolling wave broke over the deck, and cast its burden of ice upon the boat, but Frank kept her steadily on for the fast-nearing shores of the big coast island.

Barney and Pomp had hauled down all the canvas, but they remained out on deck, in readiness to be of service, and watched the wheels churning the water into a foamy wake.

Presently the boat came within a mile of the shore, and Frank fixed an intent, eager look upon it, and saw that there was plenty ice over which the Snow Bird could run, once they gained it.

The ice-boat was going along rapidly.

Its crew did not see the danger lurking in its way.

There suddenly came a terrible crash!

Shaken from stem to stern, the boat came to a sudden pause, and every one was knocked down by the awful shock.

Upon his feet scrambled Frank, and he glanced out the window, but nothing in the water met his startled gaze.

Then the appalling truth dawned upon him in a flash.

"She has struck a sunken rock!" he cried.

With an exclamation the doctor arose, and dashed inside.

He returned within a few moments, pale and breathless.

"A large hole is stove in the side!" he shouted. "The boat is filling with water, and threatening to sink at any moment!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE LAST OF THE CRIMSON SNOW.

DR. VANEYKE'S words cast the crew of the ice-boat into a fever of alarm, for they knew that the old scientist would not frighten at nothing.

"Can't the damage be repaired?" hastily asked Frank.

"No. A hole two feet in diameter has been torn through the plates."

"Are we fast to the rock?"

"We have passed over it."

"There's a small force pump in the store-

room. Connect a piece of hose with it and the hold of the boat. I'll start the pumps from this switch board just as soon as you are ready."

"The influx will be greater than the output, I fear."

"You can cover the hole with a board, and hold it there."

The doctor rushed inside with St. Malo, and a few moments later Frank heard Vaneyke shout:

"All right! Start the machinery."

With a brass connecting plug in the key-board, Frank put a battery on the donkey-pump, and in a moment more it was throwing gallons of water out of the hold.

The doctor and the Frenchman were soon struggling to diminish the amount of water coming in as Frank directed, and within a marvelously short space of time the pump emptied the hold.

The influx of water had by that time been so much reduced that the pump kept the hold free, and the boat went speeding on.

It soon reached the icy shore.

Frank located a shelving embankment of ice and snow, and sent the machine forward with such impetus that it glided up out of the water on the island without the least hesitation.

As soon as they were free of the water, the doctor made a critical examination of the damage.

"Besides tearing a hole in the plate in the midship section," said he, going into the pilot house, "the Snow Bird has only had a few rivets and bolts started."

"I expected she would suffer worse than that," said Frank. "However, it is not at all likely that we will have to go into the water with her again, so the damage can do us no harm."

"If this really is Disco island," added the doctor.

"Hoist away the mainsail and jib, boys," shouted Frank out the open window of the turret. "We'll go under sail again. My stock of chemicals is giving out, and I must husband what I've got left as carefully as possible, in order to be ready for any emergency."

The negro and Irishman obeyed.

Then the Snow Bird's machinery was stopped and the brisk wind filling away the canvas, she fled along the eastern coast to the southward in search of Godhavn.

Most of the shore line was smooth, and covered by a thick coating of ice and snow, but here and there in the cold gray misty morning there cropped out the most superb lines of cliffs of trap rock ever seen, with occasional spurs of granite.

"Godhavn means good harbor," said the doctor.

"It lies on the south side of the island, don't it?" asked Frank.

"Yes; in latitude 69 degrees. There is a low and ragged spur of granite rock, about a mile in length, which incloses a fine little harbor. There's where Godhavn lies. The rocky spur is a peninsula at low water, and at high tide an island. On the north side of it, facing the great trap cliffs, which tower up two thousand feet above the harbor, stands the town—the metropolis of North Greenland."

"Who is the last inspector, doctor?"

"At the time we were in Readestown, a young fellow of thirty named Krarup Smith. I am posted on this point, because he has a fondness for scientific discovery, and being obliged every year to visit each of the districts and stations under his charge, he has made many valuable discoveries and observations, and collected rare and curious specimens, among which are the fossil remains of limestone, coal and slate deposits. A report of his work was published world wide and reached me at home."

"Then our destination is the southern coast, and as this island is one hundred miles long, and we are at the northmost end, we have got a long journey ahead of us yet to reach civilization."

"True. We have seen the last of the crimson snow."

"Yes, the ice and snow on this island are white."

"It isn't often you see deers on this island, there are so many people constantly hunting for games here, but there is one."

The doctor pointed at a fine big buck some distance ahead.

"What an addition to our store-room!" said Frank.

"Are you going to have a shot at it?"

"Decidedly. Here, Pomp, take the wheel."

The darky steered the boat, and Frank went

outside with his rifle, as the Snow Bird went dashing up to the deer.

Doctor Vaneyke went out with him.

For a moment the deer looked at the on-coming boat in affright, and then away it ran as fleetly as the wind.

Frank raised his rifle to get a shot at it, but had to lower it again owing to the erratic movements of the creature, for he wanted to bring it down with one shot.

The ice boat was going along fleetly, but the deer went just as swift, and kept an even distance between them, showing every sign of fear of the boat.

In this manner it led them on toward a rugged mass of ice and rocks a short distance in from the shore, and was just upon the point of bounding in among them when Frank fired.

The shot sped so true to its mark that the beast bounded up in the air, was poised there an instant and then fell dead amid some pinnacles.

"Bravo!" exclaimed the doctor smilingly. "That was a good shot. You killed it with one bullet, Frank!"

"I meant to, doctor."

Pomp steered the boat over to the vicinage of where the deer fell, and Frank left his gun on deck, drew his knife out, leaped aground as the boat hauled to, and ran around the hummocks and pinnacles that stopped the further progress of the boat, to bleed his game.

The next moment he was out of sight of those upon the ice-boat, and saw the carcass of the beast lying prostrate in a small clearing, and then sprang toward it.

"Halt!" exclaimed a voice in Danish.

Frank paused and looked up at the speaker in surprise.

He was a large, heavily-built man, with a brown beard, wearing a blouse, pants and boots of seal skin, and wore a cloth cap.

In his mouth he held a short-stemmed clay pipe, and up to his shoulder he held a musket, pointed at Frank.

The aggressive attitude of the white man amazed the inventor.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked the stranger, petulantly.

"Did you shoot that deer?" demanded the man, angrily.

"I did, and I am going to bleed it now."

"You will do nothing of the sort."

"Why not?"

"Because that beast belongs to me."

"How do you figure that out?"

"The deer was tame; I used it for my sledge. It was browsing."

"Oh! Then it is too bad I killed it. I beg your pardon."

"Apologies won't give me back the life of my pet."

"Very true. But remember, I found it roaming at large, and as I was in need of food, and saw no habitation near here, I naturally thought it was a wild beast."

"There are no wild deers left on this island."

"I wasn't aware of the fact before."

"You know it now. How can you replace that beast?"

"I can't."

"Then I shall have to take satisfaction out of your hide."

"Don't be too hasty about that, I advise you, my friend."

"Hold up your hands as a token of submission."

"I won't do anything of the kind."

"Obey me, or I'll blow your heart out!"

"Don't get too murderous, old man, or—"

"Shut up! Do as I say, I tell you!"

"I won't do it."

"Then take the consequence!" hissed the man.

He pulled the trigger, and a report rang out. The bullet struck Frank over the heart.

But he merely laughed at the furious Dane. For he wore his suit of mail.

"Fire again. You touched me over the heart that time," said he.

"Eh?" gasped the astonished native, staring.

"Ain't you hurt?"

"No. It was a good shot, though. Have another."

"Wait until I load up. I'll drop you the next time."

"Can I have the deer if you fail to kill me?"

"Yes, my life with it, too," was the grim reply.

Frank did not say any more, but watched him reload his gun. When it was in readiness he fired another shot at Frank. But with no better result than before.

"You are a cold-blooded assassin," remarked Frank, severely.

"Yes. I tried to kill you for butchering my reindeer. That is law."

"The beast is mine since you failed."

"You must bear a charmed life?"

Frank shrugged his shoulders, and stooping over, he was going to drag the deer away, when the treacherous Dane rushed at him with his musket raised over his head to deal the inventor a blow.

"Back!" exclaimed Frank, starting up.

"You have broken your word, you coward!"

The man paused and recoiled, glaring balefully at Frank, for the inventor held a revolver in his hand pointed at him.

"Don't fire!" he yelled frantically, a look of horror overspreading his face. "Don't fire at me."

"I own your life, according to our contract."

"Yes—yes! But be merciful!" implored the trembling man.

"Had you any mercy upon me?"

The man was silent.

He felt guilty.

Frank pointed at the carcass of the deer.

"How much did that beast cost you?" he asked.

"I gave a pack of dogs for it," sulkily growled the man.

"How many were in the team?"

"Ten."

"They were worth one dollar apiece?"

"Yes."

"Then I will pay you ten dollars for the deer."

"I can't get another one anywhere near here."

"Do you live in this neighborhood?"

"No. I live in Godhavn. I came here on a hunt."

"Ah! Then this is Disco Island?"

"Of course. Didn't you know that before?"

"No. Pick up that deer and carry it to my sledge."

"Where is it?"

"On the other side of the hummocks. You must guide us to Godhavn. You are my slave. According to our contract I own your body. I am going to make use of you."

"But my sledge!" objected the man.

"Get it. We will take it with us for you."

"Then I'll drag the carcass to your sledge on it."

"Hand me your musket and hunting knife."

The man obeyed reluctantly.

He then got his sledge and harness, put the body of the deer upon it, and, directed by Frank, dragged it to the Snow Bird.

His astonishment at the boat was no greater than that of the rest of Frank's crew upon beholding him.

Frank soon explained matters, however.

The deer was cut up and stowed away, the sledge and the harness were taken on board, and with the man in the pilot house Frank started the boat off inland.

They presently struck the trail traversed by the Dane's rig, and began to follow it over a gleaming, white country of smooth ice plains and rugged hills.

All of the crew were singularly happy, for they felt as if the hour of their deliverance was at hand.

After a mile was passed over, and then the boat shot over toward the coast again, directed by the sullen Dane, whom Frank had paid for the loss of his deer.

He was inclined to be ugly over the matter, though, and kept a restless, impatient glance fixed upon the road ahead.

The boat glided into a narrow gorge with a turn at the end, and just as it came to the bend the man sprang out one of the open windows on deck, and leaped to the ground.

"Treachery!" shouted Frank, in alarm.

He caught hold of the lever and shut off power just as the boat shot around the bend, anticipating trouble.

Then he grasped the reverse lever.

He was too late!

The bed of the gorge ended at the edge of a transverse chasm.

Propelled forward by its own momentum, the boat shot off the edge of the yawning abyss with fearful velocity before Frank could stop it.

Down it fell—down, down, down, and then it struck the bottom with a terrible crash!

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ICE BOAT.

"Och, worra, worra, docthor dear, an' is Masther Frank dead?"

"He was badly stunned by our fall, but he yet breathes, Barney."

"Where's Pomp? Has he been kilt too?"

"I haven't seen anything of him. He was out on deck when the boat fell."

"Shure, there's wan kilt, anyhow, who we kin see is dead."

"Yes. Beauvais of Brest has lost his life, but St. Malo yet lives."

The doctor and Barney stood at the bottom of the gorge into which the ice boat had fallen an hour after the accident happened.

Beside them laid the Snow Bird.

It was a wreck!

Striking upon a snow drift, it plunged through, scattered the snow in every direction, struck the hard ice underneath, and was smashed and dented beyond all recognition.

Both masts snapped off close to the deck, carrying the rigging with them, and the bowsprit broke off, taking the headgear; the runner-arms split in two close under the body of the boat, and the bottom of the hull was stove in.

The delicate electrical machinery was shivered to fragments, every glass was broken, and every fragile object inside of the hull went to pieces from the shock.

Barney and the doctor were the only ones uninjured. Pomp had vanished, and St. Malo's companion was killed outright.

The miracle was that every one had not perished in that frightful leap of the doomed ice-boat from the gorge into the chasm where the treacherous Dane had lured it.

Dr. Vaneyke gave his attention to the injured, and did the best he could for them; but it proved to be a hard matter to revive Frank to consciousness.

St. Malo recovered first.

His grief was intense over the untimely death of his friend.

"*Sacre tonnerre!*" he cried mournfully, as he glanced down at the pale face of his dead friend. "Vy 'e was keeled zis way! Ah, *parbleu*, we were so near ze end of our journey to Godhavn, too, an' 'e deed pass through so many worse dangair wiz me in our balloon trip from Spitzbergen in search of ze north pole! Eet eez terrible!"

"Monsieur," said Dr. Vaneyke gravely, "it is fate. Fortunate are the rest of us that we did not share his doom. Recollect what a narrow escape we have all had from a similar death."

"Docthor—docthor!" cried Barney excitedly.

"Luck at Frank!"

"Ah! He is recovering at last!"

Within a few minutes Frank was entirely revived.

Mournfully he viewed the destruction of his beautiful boat.

"This is the end!" he exclaimed sadly. "We have no hope left."

"Arrah, it's despairin' yez are, sor," reproachfully said Barney.

"Have I not got cause to? Was any one killed?"

"Beauvais," replied the doctor.

"Where is Pomp?"

"He fell from the boat as she came down."

"Dead, too, no doubt?"

Every one was silent, for they mistrusted that Pomp was dead.

Frank arose presently, with a bruise on his head that had rendered him senseless, and saw that St. Malo was badly cut.

Vaneyke and Barney were not even scratched, strange to say.

"I am fortunate at escaping with my life," said Frank. "Now let us examine the boat, and see what can be done with the wreck."

"Already I have done so," explained the doctor. "It was useless."

"Is she so far gone?"

"Nothing remains but her battered hull."

"Horrible, horrible! Can we get out of this gorge?"

"Easily by a cleft in the south wall over there."

"Then we will bury poor Beauvais; see if we can find the remains of Pomp, and then set out on foot for Godhavn. We have traversed over fifty miles of the possible one hundred that measures Disco Island, and now have only one or two days journey before we will reach civilization again."

Implements were procured from the remains of the boat, and a solitary grave was made for the remains of Beauvais.

The body was placed in its tomb.

Frank had a small Bible, and taking it from his pocket he read the burial service for the dead from it over the corpse.

The hole was then covered over, and St. Malo, having made a rude cross out of some of the broken planking, he marked an inscription upon it and planted it at the head of the lone grave.

It marked the last resting place of a celebrated French balloonist.

Then the lost crew gathered some arms, ammunition, food, and a few actual necessities in a heap, and Barney made a rough sledge upon which the things were tied.

At the moment when everything was in readiness, they were all startled to see a heap of snow close by begin to fly up in the air.

ed that he was not seriously hurt, although he received several bad cuts and bruises.

Falling into the snow-drift saved his life.

He must have lost his senses, however, for he declared that he did not know anything from the time he fell up to the moment when they saw him plowing himself out.

The lost crew had much to be thankful for, despite the misery they were now in, for they had fallen from such a great height in the boat that the wonder was all escaped death.

Having everything in readiness, they left the Snow Bird's remains where they were lying, and with a parting look at the wonderful boat

trouble to push on through that field of hummocks and pinnacles off yonder."

"An' begob, there's dirty weather acomin' on, over yonder, sor," added the Irishman, pointing to the northeast.

"Yes, so there is. Great dark cloud banks are rolling along this way. Soon a storm of violence and probable duration will sweep down upon us. Within an hour we had better awaken the sleepers. We are in too exposed a place to stay in the blow."

"Do you propose ter push ahead, sor?"

"Such is my plan."



The enormous creature, goaded to fury by the wound of the harpoon, had a portion of its body upon the man, holding him down, and its gaping mouth was raised over the poor fellow's head. "Fire, Barney, it is going to kill him!" cried Frank.

Showers of it splashed in all directions, as if a volcano were bursting up through the center of the drift.

Around it whirled and dashed, up in flying clods it darted, and then with one tremendous upheaval out of the center of the agitated mass leaped the body of Pomp!

"Aloive!" yelled Barney, rushing over to his old friend and grasping him by the hand.

"Begorra, yez can't kill a nagur." "Lan' ob Goshen! Whar is I?" roared the darky, digging the snow out of his ears and blinking around at the rest.

"Out av ther snow bank," practically answered Barney.

"I done fotch up in dat yere drif, chile?"

"That's whar saved ye from gittin' pulverized inter black paste."

"Fo' de Lawd sake! Yo' doan tell me. Tought I done riz from de dead."

"Is it inter that heap av snow yez dove?"

"Reckon I did, honey."

"An' lit on yer head?"

"Yo' doan' flink a coon'd light on his buddy, an' hurt hissef, do yo'?"

Barney examined Pomp critically and report-

ed that had rendered them so many good services, they seized the rope of the sledge, went up through the cleft in the cliff, and reaching the level ground again, they started off.

Heading for the southward, and pulling the boat after them, they put the midnight sun at their backs, and by making tracks to the west of their southern course, they reached the coast.

They did not travel many hours.

Their fall had given them such a severe shaking up that they had not the strength to go far.

A camp was made.

Barney and Dr. Vaneyke being the least fatigued, stood first watch, and the rest rolled themselves in their skin robes, and lying down upon the sledge side by side, they fell fast asleep.

They had come to a pause close to the coast. Barney and the doctor lit their pipes and mounted an eminence from whence they had a clear view of the shore for many miles.

"When we get a mile or so to the south of here," exclaimed Vaneyke, "we will have hard

"Well, mebbe we moight foind a shelther in thim hummocks."

They watched the coming storm distrustfully.

The wind soon began to rise and moan over the icy landscape, and a cold, penetrating frost sprang up, bringing with it a mist of those needle-like, icy particles, the rigor of which they had often felt before, upon other occasions.

Indeed it became so bitterly cold after awhile that the doctor scarcely needed to arouse the slumbering men; the weather did it for him, and they all arose presently.

It only required one glance at the threatening sky to show them what was to be expected and Frank cried:

"We must hasten on and find shelter. If it snows there is every chance of us being buried alive in it here."

They took up their tedious, wearying march again within a few minutes, and soon reached the hummocks.

A sharp look out was kept up for some sign of a grotto or other place of shelter as they

went along, but they searched in vain, for no such place appeared.

The storm overtook them.

It began to blow and rain.

Such gusts of wind that came first were terrible, and as a dense rack and mist settled down over the gloomy scene they lost all track of where they were going.

The wind rapidly increased in force.

Soon it became so strong that the lost men were not able to withstand its fury, and had to cling to the ice to save themselves from being blown away.

Loudly it howled and shrieked over the ice,

gasped. "Nature is against us. This is the last struggle for life or death!"

And as a flying block of ice struck him he fainted.

CHAPTER XLV.

CONCLUSION.

"A SHIP! A ship!"

This welcome cry rang through the little town of Godhavn.

All the residents in the frigid Greenland settlement flocked out of their houses upon hearing the announcement.

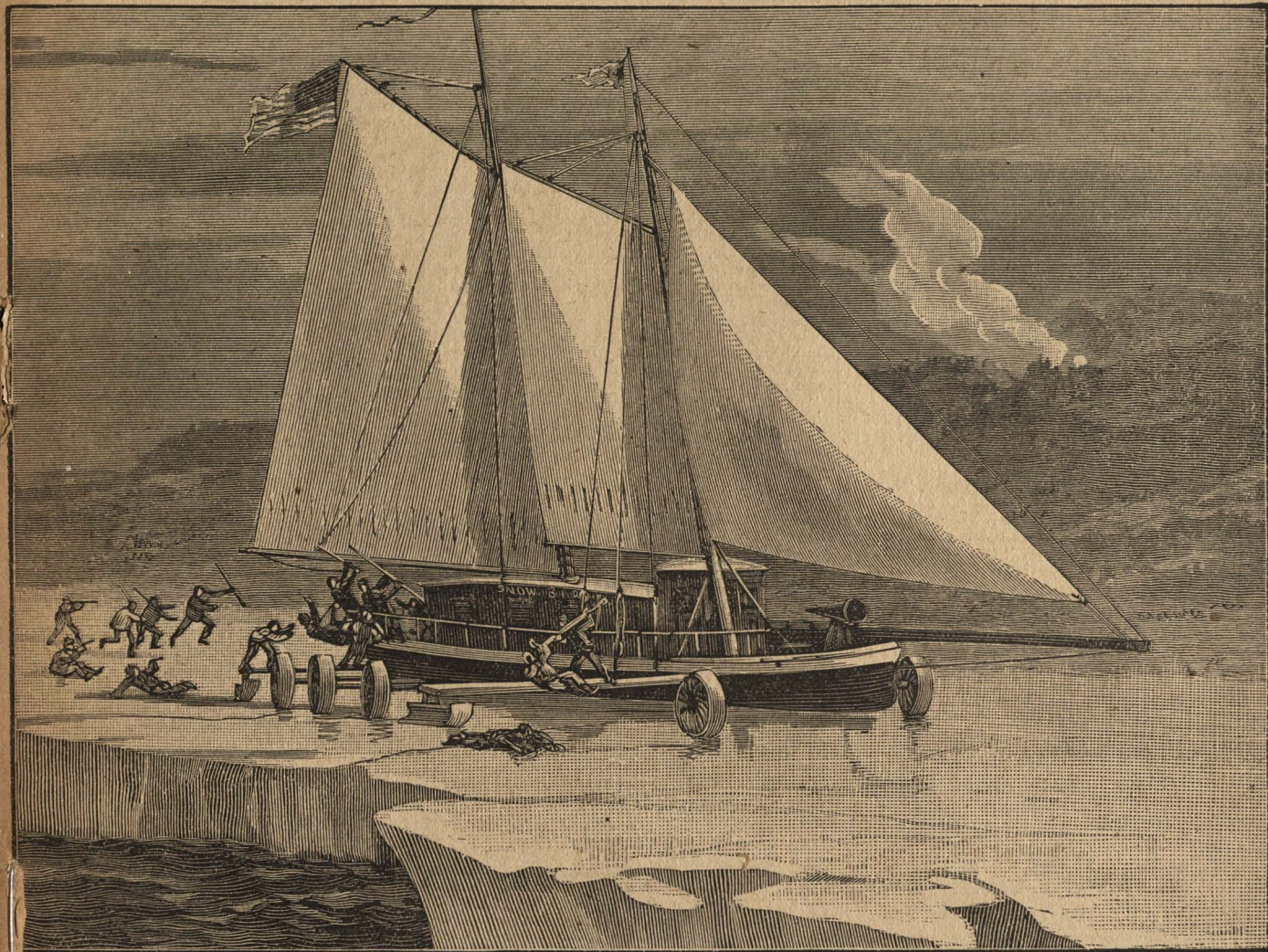
party when they saw the beautiful stars and stripes on the vessel.

"A ship to bear us home!" cried Frank, emotionally.

"God bless us," said the doctor, "she just came in right season."

"Fortune favors you, gentlemen," laughed the governor. "I have saved your lives—arrived just in the nick of time to carry you away from the storm, and now here's your ship to take you home."

"Faith she's a whaler," said Barney, "an' it's a rough look she has, much as if she'd been on a long cruise north'ard."



"Stand by to repel boarders!" cried Frank, as he turned the wheel and sent the boat flying off on the starboard tack. Barney, Pomp and the doctor attacked the men who were trying to get on board with boat-hooks and belaying pins, and after a short, sharp tussle drove them off on the ice again. Then away flashed the boat, skirting the island.

tearing up great blocks and whirling them through the air like veritable whisks of straw; down it flung huge pinnacles, smashing them to fragments as fine as dust, and along it rolled blocks of ice weighing tons, like so many toys, only to dash them into the hummocks and shiver them to atoms.

It was a regular cyclone.

Accompanied by a fearful cold blast from the north, it froze the rain upon the clothing of the poor struggling wayfarers, making them look like men of ice, and so encasing and stiffening them that they could not move their limbs.

Their boat and utensils were blown away, their weapons were dashed about and broken to pieces, and they themselves had to keep up a desperate fight to prevent themselves from being whirled off by the storm.

Several hours passed by, but the fury of the tempest did not abate, and the unfortunates found themselves fast getting exhausted by their terrible struggle.

Feebler and feebler became their strength.

A groan at last burst from Frank's lips.

"It is useless to keep up the fight for safety any longer, with all our strength spent," he

Looking from the town across the harbor one could see the lofty cliffs of trap rock which extend right and left for miles, capped above by snow, below, the waves breaking upon them fiercely and many majestic icebergs ground to pieces on their sharp angles.

The bay was only half a mile wide.

Coming in, under shortened sail, was a huge whaling ship flying the American flag at her mast truck.

Frederick Hansen was the Governor of Godhavn.

He occupied a nice comfortable house and was a great hunter.

It was just as the ship came in that he returned from an extended journey in a large double reindeer sledge.

With a rush the team of deers swiftly bore Mr. Hansen's sledge along, for the advent of a ship is the signal of great excitement and rejoicing in Godhavn, and the governor wanted to meet its captain on board as he always did.

But he had his sledge heavily freighted.

Freight he had found.

Human freight.

Frank and his friends.

A cheer burst from the lips of the rescued

"An' dargo her anchor," said Pomp.

St. Malo eagerly watched the ship haul to without uttering a word.

"It is my habit to board all incoming vessels," said the Governor, "and extend the officers and crew the hospitality of Godhavn."

"Can we accompany you?" asked Frank eagerly.

"Certainly. Here—we will drive down to the water now."

"See everybody stare!" exclaimed the doctor laughingly; "our advent here is as much a surprise as that of the ship."

The team of reindeers dashed down to the bay, where the boat of the governor was anchored, an attendant took charge of the beasts, our friends all alighted, embarked in the boat, and away they went, out to the ship in double quick time.

Upon a near approach they saw that it was the Gold Fish, of Boston, and a rope ladder was dropped down over the bulwarks when the boat ranged up alongside.

They made the skiff fast, and ascended the ladder.

A good-natured looking, bluff old captain

met them, and greeted the governor as an old friend.

"We've been on a whalin' cruise, up as far's Smith's Sound," said he, "an' have got more oil an' bone than we ought to carry. On our home'ard trip we concluded ter stop in here though, an' see if we could do anything fer yer, Hansen."

"I've only got a few passengers for you," laughed the governor.

"Passengers?" echoed the captain, glancing at our friends.

"Castaways."

"These men?"

"Yes."

"I'll take 'em."

"Thank you."

"I've got another one."

"What—a castaway?"

"Ay, ay. A lubber I picked up in Smith's Sound."

"Sailor from a wreck?"

"An Englishman. I don't like him. He's a sulky beggar. Ah, here he is now. I'll call him. Hey! Simon Grimm!"

"Simon Grimm?" echoed Frank in startled tones.

"Ay! That's his name. Do yer know him?"

The castaways exchanged glances.

They ought to know the scoundrel.

He approached at the captain's call.

His red hair and beard lent him an ugly look for they had grown long again, since his advent in Greenland.

He did not recognize our friends at once.

"Grimm! Here's some more castaways like yourself," said the captain.

The man looked up with a sullen scowl.

He recognized Frank and his friends now.

A cry of consternation pealed from his lips, his eyes flashed furiously, he turned pale in the face, and reeling back, he cried, in hoarse, thick tones:

"By 'Eaven, we meet again!"

"Ay!" exclaimed Frank, ringingly, "and to end our strife, sir."

"Monsieur," exclaimed St. Malo, casting a dark frown upon him as he advanced a step toward the amazed rascal, "you know me?"

"The Viscount of Pontivy," gasped Grimm, in horror.

"The man whose fortune you were striving to get!" cried Frank. "The man whom you strove desperately to prevent me finding!"

"He shows his guilt!" said St. Malo, sharply.

"Well he may!" cried Frank.

"Say, wot's ther meanin' of all this?" asked the amazed captain.

"Put that man under arrest, sir!" said Frank.

"Wot's he done?"

"He is a relation of this gentleman."

"Well?"

"He has been trying to swindle him out of his fortune."

"Well?"

"To attain his ends, he murdered a man named Hans Jans who was sent to me from France by the President of the Chamber of Notaries, and then tried to kill me."

"Lord save us! Is that so?"

"He set fire to the ship Polar Queen up in these latitudes, and burnt her up, leaving the crew to take to the boats to save themselves from destruction."

"An' I've saved sich a curse as that?"

"Since then he has tried by every demoniacal method a diabolical mind could suggest to kill me and my friends."

"I'll string him from a yard-arm."

"We escaped him. And now, that justice may be done, I beg of you to carry him back to civilization and put him in the hands of the authorities."

"I will, by thunder!"

"These gentlemen have told me their story and I'll vouch for their veracity," said the governor warmly. "When you hear it later on you will feel satisfied that this man Simon Grimm is one of the greatest rogues ever left unhung!"

"You hold up your hands," said the captain, to Grimm.

"No, I won't!" he snarled, recoiling.

"Hey, Rider! Hey, Murphy!"

"Ay, ay, sir," responded two of the sailors, approaching.

"Take Grimm down in ther hold an' put him in irons."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

They strode toward Grimm, having overheard the charge made against him, but he pulled a pistol out of his pocket, aimed it at them, and cried:

"Stand back or I'll blow the 'eads hoff you!"

The two sailors paused, and Grimm then aimed his pistol at St. Malo, shut one eye, and was about to pull the trigger, when with a bound Frank reached him.

He struck the weapon aside.

"None of that, you assassin!" he cried.

An exclamation burst from Grimm's lips.

"What did yer do that for?" he yelled furiously. "You're allus interferin' hof me. But I'll fix yer fer good now!"

He drew back and aimed his weapon at Frank.

"Look out!" shouted the doctor, warningly.

"Die, cuss ye!" yelled Grimm, as he pulled the trigger.

The ball whistled by Frank's face.

He sprang at Grimm and knocked the pistol from his hand, and then grappled with the chagrined wretch.

But Grimm tore himself free from Frank, and ere any one could stop him, he dove overboard.

Everyone rushed to the bulwarks and peered over.

Up came the man a moment later and he swam off.

He did not go far, however.

Flinging up his arms despairingly, he yelled: "Save me! Save me! I'm drownin'! I've got cramps!"

The next moment he disappeared beneath the surface.

He never rose again.

Several bubbles ascended to the surface.

That was all; he was drowned!

"It's a good riddance to a bad man!" exclaimed Frank.

"Let's hear what the lubber did," said the captain of the Gold Fish, and for the benefit of the whole crew who were assembled on deck, Frank told his story.

Before he finished every man on board was glad that Simon Grimm was dead, and felt the utmost sympathy for the unlucky castaways.

The captain then assigned them to quarters on the ship, and when our friends had been made comfortable, all hands went ashore to spend a few days on land.

The Governor entertained Frank, his friends and the captain at his own private house, and a most enjoyable time was spent there.

When the hour for departure came, they were all sorry to go, but last farewells were finally spoken, and everyone went aboard of the Gold Fish.

The sails were shaken out, the ship left the harbor and away they went on the homeward cruise with fine weather, a spanking breeze, and a calm sea.

The voyage to Boston was uneventful.

Not an undue incident occurred to mar the pleasure of the trip, and there our friends debarked, and took leave of the captain and crew of the Gold Fish with many regrets.

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[THE END.]

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